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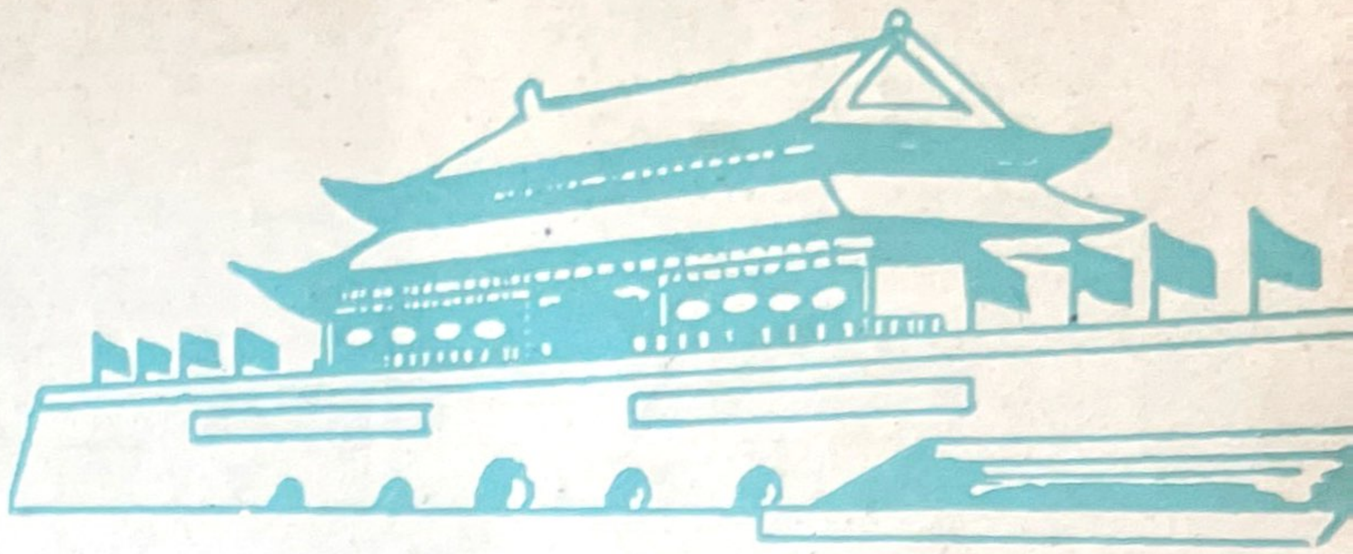

Letters from China

by Anna Louise Strong

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Foreword

HOW "LETTER FROM CHINA" GREW

Every foreigner in China gets endless letters asking about the country. It is impossible to answer everyone at length. Two years ago I began making duplicate letters by carbon copies, so that each letter might answer three or four friends, with personal notes added by pen. Later I made "inserts" of duplicated material to drop into ten or a dozen personal letters. In September 1962, owing fifty letters and having much to chat about, I printed a special letterhead with a cut of Tien An Men I had made for a Christmas card, and mimeographed "Letter from China, No. 1" in sixty copies.

Fortunately or unfortunately, as you view it, I was going that evening to one of those big diplomatic banquets at the Great Hall of the People, and I took along copies of the letter to show American friends. All of them wanted some, to save their own letter-writing. When I wrote the second letter, on the "Sino-Indian Border Conflict", I made two hundred copies to supply these friends. This and the following letter "exploded". The subject was timely; it was republished in newspapers and journals in Australia, New Zealand, Djakarta, Colombo and Ghana. People wrote asking for more and wanting to "subscribe". I hesitated, not willing to feel bound by a couple of dollars to produce "letters" by the year.

Number Five, "A Year Ends! A Year Begins!" was a New Year's greeting in which several Americans and the New Zealander, Rewi Alley, pooled efforts and mailing-lists. We had to print it. It was far too long for mimeographing for when you consider the cost of airmail, printing is cheaper than mimeographing for letters of any length. We were now issuing a thousand copies. The handling had become a problem. Either I had to organize formally or give it up. I pondered this question while going south on winter vacation.

Meantime I produced two letters which went to very few people. Number Six, "Some Questions on Cuba", was very short, done in haste just as I started south, to answer questions that were coming in. I had run short of paper, and made only sixty copies, to send to the inquirers and a few old friends. While stopping over in Canton, I was impressed by the drama of the return of the weapons to India, and wrote a letter which I labelled "6a", but which went only to four editors. I was almost entirely out of paper and equipment, and merely made carbons on my typewriter in a Canton hotel room.

Six weeks later I was back in Peking, after a rest on Hainan Island in which I had firmly decided to stop writing "letters" until I could finish a book on "Behind the Sino-Indian Conflict", which I had begun to write months earlier and in which I had been interrupted by the letters. It was barely half done. The letters, while exciting, were exhausting and I felt there was more permanent value in a book.

My readers judged otherwise. In Peking I was met by a storm of demand from all parts of the world, and also by offers of help in spreading the letters. A group of Latin Americans wanted to translate them into Spanish, to circulate among their own friends all over Latin America; similar proposals came from French and Belgian residents, to translate into French for circulation into French Africa. A Brazilian was ready to translate into Portuguese for Brazil. All this help was voluntary; neither the translators nor the addressers of envelopes took any pay. Some of them even took collections among their friends for the airmail stamps. For the "Great Debate" about Communist policy was sweeping the world; questions about China were insistent everywhere.

I dropped the Sino-Indian book and returned to the letters, at first grudgingly. But as the tension of discussions increased, I knew that my readers and eager helpers were right. This was not the time for books, but for "letters", to send them as widely and as quickly as they could go.

The four letters that followed took finally a definite printed form, determined by the amount of printed paper that could be sent for a single airmail stamp, this being the chief element of cost. These printed letters were more than twice as long as the earlier mimeographed letters and were much harder to write. For in these I sought not merely a brief personal account of recent events, but a fairly comprehensive presentation of a subject, checked and re-checked in talks with various friends.

Number Seven discussed not only the return of the captured Indian soldiers, but the "Indian dream of empire". Number Eight took up the great importance of the Communist debate on "Man's Way Through This Epoch of Revolutions and Wars". Number Nine returned to the situation inside China, its economy and livelihood. Number Ten discussed many basic questions by telling my personal reasons for coming to China.

It was Number Eight, on the great debate about "Man's Way", that finally convinced me that this was the time for "letters" rather than books. It was twice printed in Peking; it was also printed in Canada, Australia, and Britain by people who wanted copies faster and in greater numbers than I could send by airmail. It was published in Spanish by a group of Latin Americans; and in Portuguese as a front page article in a new newspaper in Brazil. It was translated into French for French Africa as well as for France itself. All this was done by eager volunteers, some of whom gave up summer vacations to do it. These co-workers on the letters have not made my own work easier but have made it infinitely more fruitful. They have won the right to be consulted now in any future plans.

With Letter Number Ten I feel that I have for the moment said the chief things I have to say about China, and again I hope for the next three months to return to the Sino-Indian book. The time has therefore come to publish the "Ten Letters" in book form. Already they make a sizable volume which covers, though in sketchy form, the main events for China of the past year. These are, in order of time, but not of importance: the Sino-Indian Conflict, the Great Communist Discussion and China's domestic success in building her economy against difficulties and in raising the livelihood of her people.

The letters have all the lacks that come from their form, but also the advantages of a rapid informal coverage on the spot of events that have importance for the future of mankind.

Anna Louise Strong

Letter Number 1

ON HARVEST MOON, U-2, PEACE

Sept. 17, 1962

Dear friends,

You will be glad to know that a good crop is being reaped on the North China Plain, which means that GRAIN is now in fair supply in all areas of China. Honan and Shantung were the last bad spots; now these have come across. Their June crop — winter wheat — was poor for drought continued into the fourth spring. Summer rains gave good autumn crops of maize, sorghum, millet, sweet potatoes. Szechuan, normal bread-basket for other provinces, also had drought in spring but a good second crop. South of the Yangtze the early rice came in long ago, and was good except in scattered flood areas. Four autumn hurricanes have already hit the late rice on the coast, bringing mixed curses and blessings. Wanda, the biggest, damaged 80,000 acres near Swatow, but brought needed rain widely to Kwangtung Province. It also hit Hongkong; the Kwangtung Branch of the Chinese People's Relief has already sent 75 tons of rice to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Hongkong as a gift for "Wanda victims".

I first got the good news from Honan from Shirley Wood. You may know her mother, Doris Dawson of

Los Altos, Calif. Shirley married a Chinese engineer years ago and now lives in Kaifeng with her husband and six children. She teaches English in a Normal College, right in the heart of the drought area. She came to Peking for her August vacation and spent a week with me. She said the worst time there was early spring of 1961, and the past spring was not good either, but they had hopes because of summer rains. Then she went back to Kaifeng and her Sept. 1 letter told me the hoped for change had come.

"Honan is having a tremendous harvest. Grain prices in the rural market (where peasants sell produce from "private plots") are rapidly dropping even before the sweet potatoes come in. Meat and eggs are so plentiful that there is no need of a ration ticket. Usually eggs taper off at this season, but this year their prices still drop. Supplies are more plentiful than in Peking and crops are even better looking". . . . Epstein got similar news from Shantung. Two of Rewi Alley's former students came on a visit from northern Manchuria where they had drought a year ago and said that this year's crop is "positively bumper".

Around Peking the reaping has been in full swing. My secretary Chao Feng-feng asked for a week's leave to "do physical labor" on the farm. She came back looking a bit browner — she was already brown from swimming at Peitaiho — and told good news from the commune next to our Peace Committee's farm. They have eight brigades and every brigade reported "tens of thousands of pounds above the plan". If you give it in tons it doesn't sound much. But after all, you eat it in pounds and not in tons. It was certainly success.

With this good news from the northern area, the tension relaxes day by day. Damage remains that will take a couple of years to tidy up; many draught animals were eaten for want of fodder and to save the people. But the first important victory is won.

It is clearly a collective victory, not merely a bit of better weather. Everyone grew food. The place Feng-feng worked is a farm on wasteland reclaimed in 1958 by the Peace Committee and other organizations; they raised vegetables, fruit and pigs to improve their dining-room. The Peace Committee even grows corn, soy, vegetables and raises over 50 hens and many rabbits, right in the down-town yard. Our housekeeper — who keeps house for a house with four families, got 200 eggs from one of her two hens, but the other hen was unproductive and went into the pot for the Moon Festival. Personal chickens have been quite a feature; you feed them garbage and a bit of grain from your "ration".

Dividends from the "Big Leap" still come in. The fruit trees planted by Peking citizens in 1958-59 — they claim 28 MILLION new trees — came across this year with more fruit than Peking ever had in its centuries of history. Big luscious peaches, juicy and sweet, pears of many kinds, apples in quantity, some as big and red as prize Wenatchees, grapes from big red Malagas to the long thin lady-slipper. Three fruit markets in one block, all crammed with fruit for the Moon Festival.

The hard years have also promoted vegetables; all cities now get more fresh vegetables from their suburbs than they ever had before. I saw 35 kinds in a big Shanghai market, all at low price. Our Peking cook provides egg-plant in a dozen ways, cauliflower, beans, tomatoes, cucumbers and lately corn on the cob. My white bread

from the "foreign store" tastes of the virgin-soil Canadian wheat, but the steamed rolls made in our kitchen use the regular Peking flour, which has a lot of maize and sorghum in it, wheat being short. The taste is not at all bad.

The Peace Committee threw a party for its foreign residents and staff — about 50 people — on the night of the Moon Festival Sept. 13. We took a dining-room at a famous restaurant on Peihai Lake in the old imperial palace, run by cooks who inherited the recipes of the Empress Dowager's favorite dishes. . . . My favorite was pieces of white meat of chicken cooked with walnuts; I took four helpings and cut out six courses later on. (Don't gasp; Chinese helpings are small.) Everyone stuffed himself as we do at Thanksgiving; Harvest-Moon is the same kind of festival. Several small children got up to sing and dance between tables, probably to shake down the food. One was an 11-year-old very black girl from the Cameroons. Her father was murdered as a fighter for independence; her mother goes on with the fight and left the little girl in Peking for an education. She was very shy at first, but now is uproarious, adding a real African flair much admired by her more restrained Chinese playmates. Afterwards we strolled by the lake, with the Harvest Moon shining on the waters.

The shooting down of the U-2 came into our talk, along with legends of the Moon Goddess and tales of how the Yuan Dynasty was overthrown by hiding daggers in moon-cakes. You saw in the Western press that a U-2, originally sold by the U.S.A. to Chiang Kai-shek, flew over East China and was brought down Sept. 9 by the Chinese air-force. Washington comment seemed confined to explaining that the U.S.A. has no responsibility for

Chiang. You probably missed some news we got here. A former air-force officer of Chiang's, Wu Pao-chih, himself shot down in August 1961 while spying over China in a U.S.-made RF-101, revealed that all such spying is directly under U.S. officers' orders; that the U-2s have a special enclosure where Chiang's ordinary officers are not admitted, and that U.S. officers give the pilot his directions, and insert and take out the films, and the photos belong to the U.S. 13th Air Task Force and not to Chiang. This doesn't surprise anyone here!

From here Kennedy seems to be stepping up tension and looking for a war, either by expanding the war he runs in Viet Nam already, burning and bombing large areas of unhappy villages, or via Chiang's wish for a last fling before he dies — he is said to be very ill. All spring and summer Chiang spent millions of U.S. dollars mobilizing and transporting large forces to the coastal islands and the Pescadores, mobilizing transport, holding joint maneuvers with U.S. troops up to and including landing operations, and conferring with a lot of top U.S. brass. Peking finally mobilized on a large scale, especially on the beaches, but made it conspicuously defensive by not having any sea-transport around. Alsop broke the story by attacking "Peking's aggression"; then Peking cut loose with charges that the U.S. was backing Chiang in an invasion. This forced several governments to take positions, including MacMillan, Kennedy, Khrushchov. Kennedy's assertion that the U.S. Fleet would prevent "aggression by either side", calmed things for a time. But when the U.S. keeps hundreds of war bases in a crescent around China, pointing missiles at China's cities, boasts of controlling the China Seas, moves troops in and out of Thailand, massacres widely in Viet Nam,

and openly removes troops from Laos but still keeps dropping commandos via the CIA into the Laos hills, . . . nobody here thinks Kennedy promotes peace.

We have more hopes from that recent Tokyo A and H Bomb Conference, which Peking cheers as the "most successful peace conference of 1962", a year which had a lot of peace conferences of many kinds. The highlight of the Tokyo Conference to me, as an American, was that there was a big American delegation with a lot of new "peace-mongers" and for the first time they were willing to name and oppose "U.S. IMPERIALISM" as the chief danger of nuclear war. This change in American attitude, even if only among a few people, opens the way to what has long been hoped for: a big international drive for "Peace Zone in the Pacific" . . . an ocean now poisoned with nuclear tests and actual wars. . . . China has long proposed this; we hope that some Americans will begin demanding it now!

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

Letter Number 2

SINO-INDIAN BORDER CONFLICT

Oct. 31, 1962

Dear friends,

You write me asking: "Why is China invading India"? The answer is that China is doing no such thing. All fighting has been on Chinese territory or on territory taken from China by India since 1950. All invasions have come from the Indian side. Peking has kept asking India to negotiate the boundary, but Indian troops have kept changing the boundary by force, taking more and more.

Always the clamor for war comes from New Delhi, the mobilization, the "state of emergency", the appeal to women to give their jewelry for arms, the attacks on Chinese Embassy and headquarters of Indian Communists. In China they have not mobilized nor declared "emergency" nor made any anti-Indian clamor. In China there is great desire for friendship with India and for negotiation of the border. Only when Nehru on Oct. 12 ordered the Indian troops to clear out the Chinese from the disputed areas, and when on Oct. 20 the Indian troops made "massive general offensive" on the entire border, did Chinese troops, which till then held their fire,

go into sharp counter-attack, from which the Indian forces broke and fled.

Even then, the territory over which the Chinese advanced had been China's until India took it by force in 1951. And even as the Chinese advanced to "recover" this territory, the Chinese government sent out an appeal to the Indian government, and to all the governments in Asia and Africa and all the "peace-loving people of the world", to help them secure a negotiated boundary and to "promote Sino-Indian friendship". China said:

> China and India are both great nations with a major responsibility for Asian peace. . . . That China and India should cross swords over their boundary is something the Chinese people and government — and the peace-loving people of the world — are unwilling to see. It is inconceivable that the boundary should be decided by force. What is the reason for these bloody clashes? China does not want an inch of Indian soil.

Then China made a triple proposal for quickly securing peace. It ran:

a) Both sides declare intent to settle the boundary by negotiation.
b) Both sides stop fighting and withdraw twelve miles from the "line of actual control" and disengage to relax tension.
c) Both premiers meet either in Peking or Delhi to negotiate.

This appeal, sent early on Oct. 24, at once won support in the press of Asia and Africa as well as in Moscow's *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. But Nehru refused before the end

of the day, calling the proposals "deceptive and confusing". He demanded that Chinese troops first withdraw to the positions they held Sept. 8, before any negotiations could be discussed.

The *People's Daily* replied Oct. 27 that the present "line of control" was not very different from that on Nov. 7, 1959 when China first proposed joint withdrawal of 12 miles to avoid clashes; if China had in some places advanced further, return might be made to the positions of 1959. But for China to withdraw to the "positions of Sept. 8, 1962" would be "unreasonable", since this would "legalize" the seizures of territory made by India's attempts to alter the boundary by force. These included:

a) 2,500 sq. mi. of territory taken by India in the western sector.
b) The Wuje area in the middle sector.
c) The Kechilang River valley and many other places in the eastern sector which India had taken even to the north of the McMahon Line.

This listing revealed in a flash the extent of territory taken by India since 1959, and also made clear the magnitude of her defeat in the last ten days of Oct. 1962. It was India which had been trying to change the boundary by force for three years; and the attempt had failed.

* * *

Let us glance at the actual zone of battle. Take Tawang, the only populated place of any size so far in the war news. New Delhi calls it an "Indian town taken by Chinese troops after desperate fighting Oct. 24". The Chinese border guards in the town report that they entered Oct. 25, found it "still burning" and "restored

order". The Indians had left the previous afternoon after burning supplies and some buildings and taking away some inhabitants. . . . But WHY were they all there?

Tawang is a Tibetan county town at about 10,000 feet elevation, in an area of steep mountains, thick forests, swift rivers, with lush pasture and good barley land on their banks. It had a magistrates court and a monastery. Its name is Chinese and means "Great Prince". For nearly 300 years, since the Fifth Dalai Lama — named by the Chinese Emperor as "King of the Law in the Western Land of the Buddha" — "unified the tribes" about 1700, Tawang paid taxes to Lhasa and Lhasa named its magistrates and monastery chiefs. . . . Then eleven years ago, Indian troops took Tawang by surprise attack Feb. 7, 1951, drove out or jailed the magistrates and expelled a "Living Buddha" who complained to Lhasa that they treated him roughly and took the grain that he had collected for the Lhasa monasteries. Then India made Tawang its central fortress towards Tibet, building a road of about 120 miles to connect it with the Indian plain below. Is Tawang now an "Indian town"? Depends on the point of view!

Nehru claims it by a line drawn in Delhi on a map in 1914 by a British officer named McMahon. This line, now called "McMahon", took 90,000 sq. km. (about 35,000 sq. mi.) from China's Tibet and gave them to British India. McMahon got a Tibetan envoy named Shatra to sign his map. Shatra, later said to have been bribed, was not empowered to give away territory. The Dalai Lama repudiated the line; every Chinese government since then repudiated the line. Sir Henry Twynam, British governor of Assam in 1939, later wrote in the *London Times* Sept. 2, 1959: "The McMahon Line does not exist and never did."

Nehru used this shaky title to take the territory in 1951. He first asked Lhasa for it, but the Tibetan notables called a council and angrily refused. Nehru was in a hurry because Lhasa just then was negotiating an Agreement with the new Chinese People's Republic, by which Tibet would "return to the motherland" and install the People's Liberation Army (PLA) as guard at the national frontier. So India got there first. When the PLA reached the frontier at the end of 1951 or later, Indian troops held possession, in the name of McMahon, of some 35,000 sq. mi. of China's Tibet. Thus began the problem of the border. . . .

China's position throughout was that the McMahon Line was illegal and that China expected India to negotiate a friendly border but meantime Chinese troops were ordered not to cross the McMahon Line to avoid clashes with India. Nehru's position was that until China recognized the McMahon Line no negotiation could begin. After 1959 India made new claims in the high wilderness of ice and rock on the western sector of the border. From the nature and timing of these claims, which began after the 1959 Lhasa rebellion failed, it seemed that the question was not primarily the border, but the control of Tibet, that India not only wished to inherit Britain's special interest in that area, but was pushed on by the long arm of a newer and stronger imperialism, that America's fingers reached through India to grasp that high strategic plateau and complete the encirclement of China.

For three years India built roads, sent troops, set up military posts until by Oct. 1962 she had 43 posts in the

high wilderness where neither British nor Indian control had penetrated before. They were between and behind the Chinese posts already there, harassing Chinese guards, ambushing their transport, breaking their supply lines. India also built additional posts in the eastern sector of the border, taking new land even north of the McMahon Line.

Against all these aggressions China had a definite policy, explained to me by a man recently returned from the frontier. The Chinese guards were ordered never to fire the first shot, and not to fire at harassments except to save their lives, to stop shooting if the enemy stopped, and not to pursue if the enemy withdrew. They sought thus to convince the Indian soldiers that they did not want to fight but to be friends and to convince nearby nations that they sought not aggression but peace. This they were to do as long as possible, but if and when it came to a general offensive from India, they were to be ready to hurl it back by a strong, swift counter-attack. They also warned India of this.

> This it seems occurred in October when Nehru on the 12th ordered his troops to clear out all the Chinese, and unleashed on the 17th an artillery barrage that caused heavy Chinese casualties, and on the 20th began a pre-dawn general offensive along the border. The Chinese hurled it back within the hour and routed the Indian forces in a few days. Yet even as they for the first time crossed the McMahon Line, they appealed for negotiation, for peace, and for Afro-Asian help in this.

Nehru refused, but the Afro-Asian nations didn't. The first responses came from the nearest nations, Nepal,

Pakistan, Ceylon where the press began to support China's "triple proposal". The press in Cambodia, Indonesia, Iraq followed, then governmental consultations for mediation began in Cairo and Bagdad. Very significant was the attitude of Bhutan, a tiny semi-independent state, with only 700,000 people, whose border runs so close to the hottest fighting that the people probably heard the guns. Yet Bhutan's premier, when summoned to Delhi, refused any Indian military help and told the Calcutta newsmen on his way home that there was in Bhutan no mobilization, no "state of emergency" and they weren't going to join this war. . . . The calm in Bhutan rebuked the hysteria in India.

The West now supports Nehru with arms for war, which Washington will try to turn to the seizure of Tibet. But little Bhutan, with a ring-side seat on the battles, shows faith in China's non-aggressive strength. Bhutan's faith will affect other Asian and African nations, as they seek to help China make, not war but peace.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong.

Letter Number 3

QUESTION NOW — WHITHER INDIA?

Dec. 10, 1962

Dear friends,

Events unprecedented in history took place on the Sino-Indian border in the last November days. Chinese forces, still called "border guards" in Peking's laconic reports, so different from the war fever of Delhi, swept in four days, Nov. 16 to 20, down the rugged Himalayan slope, bypassing and trapping Indian armies strung out hundreds of miles in the Northeast Frontier Agency. Panic hit Tezpur, India's war-base on the Brahmaputra, as soldiers, officers, civil authorities and civilians streamed over the river in flight. Pandemonium broke in Parliament when Nehru announced the fall of Walong, Se La, Bomdi La, last gates to Assam. In two more days, it seemed, his government might fall. Air-India grounded all planes but one line to Bombay, and prepared to save British personnel from Assam's tea and jute plantations, which account for one-fourth of India's foreign trade.

Suddenly, at midnight Nov. 20, Peking announced that the fighting was over, that Chinese would "Cease Fire" in twenty-four hours, and begin on Dec. 1 to withdraw back up the mountain to the positions they held Nov. 7, 1959, before the fighting began. They would then

withdraw all armed patrols yet another 20 kilometers, so that effective disengagement might prevent clashes. In the intervening space they would keep only civilian police to protect inhabitants from bandits. They had offered this many times and they hoped this time India might make similar disengagement, so that tensions might relax and negotiation be held to settle the border. Whether or not India did, China would cease fire and withdraw unilaterally, reserving the right of self-defense if attacked.

Never in history has so victorious an army halted after such a victory and declared a Cease-Fire and Withdrawal to the positions held before conflict. New Delhi could think of no reply except to call it a trick. The Western press, astounded, spoke of the "inscrutable Oriental mind". Then Nehru recovered and demanded that China withdraw not to its 1959 positions but to the positions of Sept. 8, 1962. What this meant was clear when Peking replied, politely but firmly, that the Sept. 8 position was "unacceptable" because it would "legalize" all of India's seizures of territory for three years and establish the positions India took to launch her recent offensives. Such positions were neither "reasonable" nor in the "interests of peace". The 1959 positions, before India pushed forward and set up positions for attack, were "reasonable and conducive to peace and preserved equal dignity on both sides".

It thus became clear to all that between Nov. 7, 1959 and Sept. 8, 1962, India had taken by force of arms some 4,000 sq. km. of territory from China, and China had now taken it back in a matter of days.

America, Britain, France, West Germany, Australia poured arms into India, encouraging the thought of a long, long war. The Afro-Asian Bandung nations promptly welcomed the Cease-Fire-Withdrawal, and began to urge negotiations for a long, long peace.

So the question became: **Which** will India choose?

This spectacular Cease-Fire-Withdrawal which the West called "inscrutable" seemed to Peking the only way left to proclaim to the world — especially to India and the Afro-Asian nations: "We don't want war! We don't want victory! We don't want an inch of Indian soil! We want a peaceful border and Indian friendship. This cannot be had by fighting but only by mutual accommodation in which both sides negotiate with equal dignity."

Did China have to take the entire Himalayan slope in order to say this? It seems she did! Many times in three years she asked for Cease-Fire and disengagement; India always refused. China even waited three weeks in Tawang near the top of the slope and again asked for disengagement. India declared a new offensive with new American arms. So China had to disperse that Indian army that pestered her for three years. She did it by taking them on the Himalayan slope, the 90,000 sq. km. of territory that India includes in NEFA but that was Chinese territory till India took it in 1947-51. China called that seizure illegal but kept the border peaceful by not crossing India's new line. But in 1959 India made more claims to 33,000 sq. km. of high icy wilderness on the Western Border, called Aksai Chin, "China's White Stone Desert", which contains China's only route between Sinkiang and Tibet. India never in history owned it and has no use for it, except to block China's road to Tibet.

For three years, 1959-62, Indian troops advanced into this area, and set up 43 armed posts, encircling China's border posts, cutting their supply lines, harassing the border guards. China protested in diplomatic notes but withheld her fire. India kept right on. Finally on Oct. 20, 1962 India launched a massive general offensive to drive all Chinese out. China made two counter-attacks and drove the Indians out instead. Then she refused the fruits of victory and went back where it started, and asked again for Cease-Fire, disengagement and negotiation. If this time India again refuses, at least the world will know who asked for peace. For this dramatic victory and withdrawal makes everyone look at the border and ask what it is all about. It also brings America openly into the conflict and calls the Afro-Asians to try to help the peace.

American friends ask questions both friendly and cynical:

1) WHY does China fight for all that ice and rock?
2) Did China need a shooting war to build morale at home?
3) Hasn't China just thrown India into America's lap?

1) The fighting is NOT for ice and rock and not for a border. It is for control of Tibet. The nature of India's demands and attacks have shown it; Nehru's order Oct. 12 to clear the Chinese out entirely was final proof. America, like Britain before her, seeks through India control of that strategic roof of the world. China cannot yield to India the Tibetans who once were serfs and now are free; nor can she permit America to complete China's encirclement by control of the high plateau of Tibet.

2) India, not China, needs a shooting war to build morale. China tried to avoid this war. When she had to fight, she did it as quickly, effectively and economically as she could, without mobilization, demonstrations, or gloating, without even using the word "victory". The "border guards", somewhat expanded, did the job; the rest of China concentrated on its economy which steadily goes ahead.

3) India was already "in America's lap", but now the world knows it. Aid granted India by the U.S.A. and U.S.-controlled funds in the past ten years (see "Foreign Aid" of U.S. International Cooperation Administration) averaged only $105.2 million a year for the first six years when India was a neutral; then from mid-1956 to 1959 when she moved to the right, India got $645.5 million yearly; now for the three years 1959-62 in which she fights China, she averages $1,290.8 million a year. Is Nehru any longer a fully "free agent"? Or is he bound to his creditors?

China's action forces the question:

Will India now choose peace or is she bound to war?

Even as the arms and military aid from all the NATO and SEATO nations pour into India, tempting her to a long, long war, China's act has rallied the Afro-Asian nations to work for peace. As I write these words, six nations meet in Colombo, to seek for peace between China and India. They want India as an anti-imperialist Bandung partner, not an example of "Asians fighting Asians" for Washington's gain.

* * *

Meantime the Chinese border guards withdraw up the wintry Himalayan slopes towards the positions they held

in 1959. Steadily they release the sick and wounded Indian prisoners into the hands of the Indian Red Cross before they leave. The Hsinhua reporters see the "prisoners" waving goodbye and thanking their Chinese doctors, but the Western press is not allowed to interview them when they reach Tezpur.

Moving stories come of farewells by local inhabitants, few of whom are Indian by nationality or with any love for Indian troops. One is from Walong at the extreme eastern tip of the disputed area, near Burma. "Starting on Nov. 30, the frontier guards cleaned the houses where they had lodged eleven days, drew water and gathered firewood for the householders. At S. they left 40 bricks of tea to pay labor on a bridge that was damaged in the fighting. In Ch. they had rebuilt houses of poor people that Indian soldiers burned; before the Chinese left, they helped the people move into their new houses and got firewood for them. The people said: 'We shall never forget you, as kind as Buddha!'

"Early in the morning the local people, often whole families, waited on the road to bid farewell. In one village of fifteen families, everyone walked with the guards as far as the river, helping their old folks and leading their children; then they all waved goodbye as the guards crossed. Scores of peasants brought bananas and sweet potatoes and thrust them into the guards' pockets. In Walong where the guards rebuilt many burned houses, some people told them: 'We have no written language to record your kindnesses, but we shall tell them to our children down generations.' "

Few in the West will believe these stories; I record them for those few. In China such acts of solidarity and help to poor people are known as the tradition of

the People's Liberation Army. Now these acts have been done in India too. But is this India? Or is it China? It is the disputed land. Wherever the frontier may here be settled, its peoples will be "Asian brothers" to the PLA.

This is the only victory they take with them from the territory they claim and won yet will not take unless it comes by negotiation in peace.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

Letter Number 4

THE GREAT DEBATE

Dec. 30, 1962

Dear friends,

The Great Communist Debate which has smouldered some years became open worldwide discussion in December by four attacks on China in four European Party Congresses, climaxed by a fifth from Khrushchov in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and followed by China's first public reply.

China's reply used a technique now familiar here in serious discussions but I think unknown elsewhere. On Dec. 14 the *People's Daily* gave a page and a half to 38 attacks on China from the Czech Congress, 19 by Czechs and 19 by fraternal delegates, all displayed effectively, even artistically, giving each attacker a separate paragraph or more under name and country as headline. No comment or reply was made, readers being supposed to think it over first without guidance from leaders. Discussion of course buzzed everywhere in streets, factories and homes.

For 24 hours hundreds of millions of Chinese, busy in jobs on farms or in factories and offices, faced the terms "adventurist", "sectarian", "splitter", "nationalist", "dogmatist", and saw their country's position on Cuba,

Albania, the Indian border etc. attacked. They thought it over.

Then on Dec. 15 appeared the *People's Daily* editorial:

"WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE TO OPPOSE OUR COMMON ENEMY!"

Thus it was clear that a worldwide discussion was on!

* * *

Twice in recent years international conferences of Communist Parties have discussed differences and reached agreements which all signed. The "1957 Moscow Declaration" by 12 Parties of the socialist nations, and the 1960 "Statement of 81 Parties" from all parts of the world, became authority, agreed by all. This unity was broken nine months later when Khrushchov attacked Albania in the 22nd Congress of the C.P.S.U., which had no jurisdiction over Albania and to which Albania was not invited. Chou En-lai, leading the Chinese delegation, criticized this procedure without naming either Khrushchov or Albania, but by noting the general principles for settling inter-Party differences which has been unanimously agreed.

Fifty Parties followed Khrushchov by attacking Albania; thirty did not. These 30 have more membership than the other 50, for China and Indonesia together have nearly half the Communist members in the world. In general, the Europeans followed Khrushchov, the Asians followed Chou, on the question of procedure between Parties. The discussion widened and drew in other differences, but was indirectly discussed, Khrushchov's attacks being at "Albania and her supporters", and China's

against "modern revisionists like Tito". Neither side wished to start a split between the two giant nations.

Finally in late 1962 open attack began against China in four European Party Congresses, in dramatic crescendo showing planning from the top. Bulgaria, Nov. 4, through Hungary, Italy to Czechoslovakia, Dec. 4-8 showed a steady rise in number, force and directness, up to the 38 attacks in Prague.

Each of these four congresses was attended, and presumably advised, by high Party leaders of the U.S.S.R. from Suslov through Kuusinen and Kozlov to Brezhnev, the Soviet chief of state. This includes all "top guys" of the Kremlin except Khrushchov himself and Mikoyan, who had just spent the month in Cuba, presumably trying to get Castro to consent to "inspection on the spot", the "spot" belonging to Cuba.

The attack then escalated to Moscow where Khrushchov gave much of his long report to the Supreme Soviet to berating China indirectly but clearly while Tito — China's symbolic and actual opponent — sat as honored guest alongside. Nothing was omitted that might obliterate China's standing in the socialist camp of nations and the Communist world.

China's reply was the publication of the 38 attacks in Prague, and the editorial: "Workers of All Countries, Unite to Oppose Our Common Enemy". The editorial covers several subjects; we shall not have room for all. It is hard-hitting, sharply reasoned but without abusive epithets; it deals with principles not with personalities. Its main theme is the need of unity of the progressive forces, and how to get it. It should be read in its entirety in *Peking Review*, Dec. 21, 1962.

It calls for unity of the world's workers and especially of the Communists, to oppose imperialism, the common enemy of mankind. Maintenance of unity depends on observing the principles jointly agreed in international congresses, such as the "1957 Moscow Declaration" and the 1960 "Statement of 81 Parties". Unity cannot be had by dominance of a single Party setting up its own resolutions as an "international law" and denouncing in public, without a hearing, Parties that dare to disagree. The using of one Party's congress to attack another Party is "an erroneous method", first used in the 22nd Congress of the U.S.S.R., where the Chinese delegation opposed it at the time.

Differences of opinion, says the editorial, arise from different historical experiences and are not of themselves bad. They should be reconciled for the sake of unity, and the way to do this is laid down in the "81 Parties Statement". The principles unanimously adopted include "full equality . . . uniting while retaining independence and sovereignty . . . reaching common views through comradely consultation on an equal footing". If these principles are violated, if one Party attempts to impose its views as international law, and gives itself the right to attack a fraternal Party at will while denying the other the right to reply, if slander and attack are substituted for comradely consultation, "splitting and sectarianism" result.

The editorial calls the attack on Albania a "splitting action". To call China "splitter" because she disapproved of it is calling "black, white". And now it goes further. China was attacked for refusing to attack Albania. Now Korea is criticized for refusing to attack China. This is the breaking of the unity of the Communist world, which

cannot be dominated by any one Party but only by decisions of international congresses. . . . The editorial clearly sees in such congresses, not isolated acts for emergency, but the normal method for constantly bringing unity out of constantly occurring differences. The 1957 and 1960 conferences, which some people regard as attempts at unity that failed, are seen by China as useful routine for unity. It is time for another now.

China's position on Cuba is attacked; she is called "adventurist". It is even said she "tried to plunge the world into thermo-nuclear war". Is this true? No! China seeks peace; she stands for complete ban of nuclear weapons. It was "not China that requested the introduction of nuclear arms into Cuba", nor did China "object to taking them away". Where is the "adventurism" and "plunging the world into war" to be found?

China supports "the correct line of the Cuban Party" and the "five just demands of the Cuban people". She agrees with Fidel Castro that "the way to peace is not by sacrificing the people's rights"; she agrees that "the best form of settlement is by peaceful channels and discussion between governments", but that "this is not secured by capitulation but by the type of heroic defense of national sovereignty that Cuba made". She "supports Cuba's sovereignty". "Is it required that we try to force Cuba to give up her sovereignty . . . to avoid being called adventurist?"

Then the editorial swings into counter-attack with the words: "We hold that socialist countries have no need to use nuclear weapons as a gambling counter or for frightening others. To do this would truly be to commit the error of adventurism. To have blind faith in nuclear weapons and fail to recognize . . . the strength of the

masses of the people . . . would be likely to lead one to jump from one extreme to the other and commit the error of capitulationism."

China has been attacked on the question of the Indian border as "precipitating disaster" and "pushing the Nehru government towards the West". No, says the editorial, we have always stood for settling borders by peaceful negotiation but Nehru has always refused. For the past three years India steadily encroached by armed force into China's territory, while China's border guards withheld their fire. Finally, taking China's restraint for weakness, Nehru announced and launched on Oct. 20 a massive general offensive to which "any sovereign state would have been forced to reply". China "having repulsed the Indian attacks, at once proposed disengagement and negotiation, and took the initiative of a Cease-Fire and Withdrawal". As a result, the border tension has begun to ease, and "de facto" Cease-Fire is established.

Again the editorial counter-attacks, asking: "Where is the Marxism-Leninism of those who refuse to see the class nature of the Indian bourgeoisie? They "suppress with increasing brutality the Indian people", and therefore seek imperialist aid and "inflame border war as excuse". Their "persistent anti-China stand comes from their increasingly reactionary domestic and foreign policies". Those who blame China "mistake cause for effect". Where is the proletarian internationalism of those who call China "brother" but "actually take the Indian reactionaries as kinsmen"?

The sharpest comment is perhaps the statement that "the minimum demand of a Communist is that he makes clear distinction between the enemy and his own comrades". There are some who are "accommodating" to imperialists and who treat their comrades as "implacable enemies". This is not the stand for a Marxist-Leninist to take". . . .

I refer you to *Peking Review* Dec. 21, for the rest.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

Letter Number 5

A YEAR ENDS! A YEAR BEGINS!

Jan. 12, 1963

(The friends who have helped me with this "New Year" letter are **Israel** and **Elsie Epstein,** formerly of New York, writers and editors in Peking; **Sidney Rittenberg** formerly of Charleston, S.C., Palo Alto and Yenan, now in radio work in Peking and father of three beautiful little girls; **Rewi Alley,** famous New Zealand author and cooperator, my neighbour here; **Talitha Gerlach,** for many years with the YWCA in the U.S. and China and **Gerald Tannebaum** of Baltimore, both now with the China Welfare Institute, Shanghai; and two other Americans, **Joan Hinton,** working on a big livestock farm outside Sian, and **Shirley Wood,** college teacher and mother of six in Kaifeng.)

In China, 1962 was the year when they got "over the hump" in harvests, in consumer goods and in the general economy, when people in all areas began to feel not merely recovery but the sense of a coming upsurge. Other friends will tell about it below. In the world, the main events were three at the year's end: the Cuban

Crisis; the Sino-Indian Conflict and the beginning of the Great Communist Debate.

1) **In Cuba,** Castro emerged as the world's MAN OF THE YEAR, for his courage and clarity in defending the rights of small nations. Most of my American friends missed this; they saw an alleged nuclear war-threat that was barely escaped. To us the threat seemed phony, a nuclear blackmail by Kennedy. The missiles, both in their installation and in the manner of withdrawal, seemed an injury to Cuba by confusing her Latin American support. The deal of the two K's ignored Cuba's existence as a Revolution and even as a nation. Castro, in his November First television speech, restored the dignity of his nation and therewith of the world's people. Even in faraway Nepal, a monarchy, Castro was applauded when he demanded that any "inspection" be equal, for American bases as well as Cuban bases. Castro became a world figure for his defense of the equal sovereignty of little nations.

2) **The Sino-Indian Border Conflict** was ended for the time by the collapse of the Indian armies and the incredible Chinese announcement of a Cease-Fire-Withdrawal, in the moment of full victory, back to the positions of Nov. 7, 1959, before the fighting began, with an additional withdrawal of 20 kilometers for armed patrols behind the "line of control". The West pours arms into India, encouraging her to a long, long war. Peking called on India for a negotiated border, and called on the Afro-Asian nations to help. This posed the question: Whither India?

3) **The Great Communist Debate** came into the open Dec. 15 when China, four times attacked by four European Party Congresses, climaxed by a fifth time by

Khrushchov in the Supreme Soviet, finally made a public reply Dec. 15. The technique is important; the Peking *People's Daily* filled a page and a half on Dec. 14 with 38 attacks against China, made in the Prague Congress, and left these for 24 hours without reply for the readers to think over. Then came the editorial: "Workers of All Countries, Unite to Oppose Our Common Enemy!" and it was clear that an open worldwide debate had begun. Two weeks later the paper gave a page to Togliatti's attack on China and published a lengthy reply. So far the argument deals with basic principles not with personalities.

* * *

All these struggles of worldwide importance took sharp form in late 1962 and will develop further in 1963.

1) Peace has not returned to the Caribbean. Kennedy rides high, for his nuclear blackmail won! The first victim of the Cuban crisis, say cynical Britons, is MacMillan, for at Nassau Kennedy, as a London paper said, "pushed Britain into the mud and made her pay for the mud"; the U.S. press openly disdains her as a second class power. American spokesmen gloat that a "firm policy pays"; they may try it next on Berlin. Yet — on the other side of earth, the people of a little half-nation, South Viet Nam, organized in a "Liberation Front", won a spectacular victory against Americans and the Ngo Dinh Diem armed forces just as 1963 began, bringing down several helicopters in an open battle not very far from Saigon. If the South Vietnamese ever heard of "nuclear blackmail", they figure it doesn't apply to them.

2) Peking's action on the border rallied wide support from Afro-Asian nations. Six nations met in Colombo to seek peace. Their precise views vary but all unite on two things: a) that China and India should meet to negotiate their border; b) that the West should not be allowed to turn India into an armed Western base. As 1963 opened two high dignitaries came to Peking to discuss these matters. Mrs. Bandaranaike, the world's only woman prime minister, came from Ceylon to present the views of six nations; Vice-Premier Subandrio of Indonesia came separately to assist the lady and also to put in his own word for another Bandung Conference to strengthen Afro-Asian nations in their general anti-imperialist mutual help. So, out of the Sino-Indian border conflict, wider Afro-Asian unities may flower.

3) The Great Debate brings peril and also hope. If it is conducted by dictation and name-calling, it may confuse and splinter the world's progressive forces; this is already a dangerous trend. But if it concentrates on basic principles, and especially if it leads to another international conference of the world's Communist Parties, as the Chinese propose, it will clarify issues that need clarification and illumine man's road to progress and world peace. With the multiplicity of socialist countries and revolutionary movements, differences are bound to arise and are nothing to be feared. The urgent problem now is to learn how to discuss them and settle them in a comradely way, on the basis of the common goals and the real lessons of world events — as a normal routine method.

A Chinese leader told me: "The whole world now goes to school, the lessons are hard ones and people have to study them because they are needed for mankind's progress. If so many people study very hard, they should come up with fundamental answers."

The *People's Daily* called 1962 "a year woven of struggles and victories". 1963, I think, will see more of the same.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

CHINA: PROGRESS ON THE ECONOMIC SCENE

Israel Epstein

At this beginning of 1963, People's China may well say, in the famous words of Mark Twain, that her obituary notices were greatly exaggerated! The would-be mourners (or celebrants) at her wake found a coming-of-age party instead. The past year has been one of health and vigor. Here I shall deal with the economy.

First, agriculture. 1959, 1960 and 1961 saw the most widespread natural calamities in memory. But they were memorable, too, as years in which the People's Communes, with their built-in large-scale mutual help, prevented the kind of starvation seen even in "normal" years under Chiang Kai-shek's and earlier governments. Despite the very serious difficulties, or rather because of the way the test was met, this new form of organization matured and took deeper root in the hearts of the people. Rapidly improving their functioning in the time of trial, the communes produced a 1962 harvest that not only provided ample grain for the people but allowed for substantial increases in livestock (and consequently the protein diet). Now there is added emphasis on cotton and other industrial crops, and on the technical modernization of agriculture. It is instructive to see how the prophets of disaster have fallen victims to their own propaganda. Chiang Kai-shek last year sent nine batches of infiltrators to land or parachute secretly in the southern coastal area, and start guerrilla warfare there. They had been assured that they would be warmly welcomed by the people. And so they were. All 170 or so, picked "leaders" and "commanders" equipped with the appropriate ranks and American-supplied paraphernalia, were killed or cap-

tured within from two hours to two days of their arrival. The job was done by commune farmers of the people's militia, acting by themselves or alongside regular troops. This news is offered, free of copyright, to Mr. Joseph Alsop and all others who have stated so often, in the recent past, that only a match is needed to "kindle the flames of rural revolt" in China.

Second, industry. The results of the tremendous increases of 1958-60, which saw the completion in three years of most of the targets set for the 1958-63 Five-Year Plan, have been consolidated as a basis for further advance. Essential consumers' goods, after temporary shortages due to lack of agricultural raw materials and the pressure of constantly rising purchasing power, are now more broadly available than ever before, in villages as well as cities. As for heavy industry, it is now geared mainly to the chief job at hand, the modernization of farming. Last year saw considerable growth in both the supply of, and the manufacturing facilities for, chemical fertilizers, irrigation pumps, tractors and the special steels for making all parts of tractors and other farm equipment, petroleum and the machinery for drilling and refining, etc. Mechanization of agriculture is still in an early stage, considering China's immense needs. But facts such as the 20,000 tractors now working in the single northeastern province of Heilungkiang show the distance already covered.

Taking the economy as a whole, every sector was affected by adverse circumstances in 1959-61. Difficulties in agriculture had their effect on light industry. Heavy industry was additionally unfavourably affected by its previous dependence for many vital parts and equipment on import contracts, which proved unreliable. The years

1961-62 were devoted to adjustment and filling out, meaning a concentration on top-priority needs and the attainment of the needed variety and quality to give the economy an independent base for further growth. Thanks to the efforts of workers, engineers and scientists, this base now exists to an unprecedented extent. As for modern know-how, China has created her own considerable force of college trained engineers; 290,000 graduated since 1949 as compared to only 32,000 in the entire 22 years of the Chiang Kai-shek regime. Given normal crops, which are the basis of everything, one can expect to see further developments along the line of the great leap forward before too long, on a truly firm foundation. And the main job of industry, at present, is to do its part in securing such crops.

It is not my purpose here to wander outside the economy; but since the economy, like everything else, is built by human beings and depends on their spirit, a word needs to be said about this. Everywhere in China one meets exultant confidence in revolutionary socialism. This is reflected in the sphere of spiritual production, books, films and plays. These are better than ever. In internal themes, the concentration is on memories of indomitable revolutionary struggles (such as the novel *Red Crag* about the valiant fight of political prisoners in the U.S.-Chiang Kai-shek death camp in Chungking, which has sold two million copies), and on the new, socialist life in the countryside (the very popular, very fine films *Second Sister Li* and *Locust Village* being outstanding examples).

Socialist transformations continue. In this regard, Tibet is now catching up with the rest of the country. Having completed its democratic reform (land reform), it is now holding the first elections for its own local and

regional people's congresses, and thus attaining the organizational as well as material basis for socialist advance in step with all other parts of this great land.

China knows her past, her present and her aims for the future. She is determined never to return to the first, proud of the second, and confidently moving toward the third.

WERE WE ON THE BRINK? HOW TO WIN PEACE

Talitha Gerlach

Momentarily we seem a little further from the brink! . . . In making appointments people add: "If we are still here!" . . . What a note on which to end the year! Several friends in capitalist lands include such comments in their letters. Others say: — I paraphrase: "The U.S.S.R. showed concern for peace, the U.S.A. drew back from nuclear holocaust, the Cuban people unite on Castro's 'Five Points' and can now go ahead and build their country."

But seriously! Has Kennedy given up his plan to throttle the Cuban Revolution, the first socialist country in the Western Hemisphere, to prevent similar revolutions in other Latin American lands? Far from it! So we must see clearly that the imperialism of the U.S.A. is the key threat to world peace, and must base our work for peace on this fact.

On this side of the world we are sharply conscious of the war-pressures from Washington: the U.S. stubbornness in its hold on Laos, the U.S. forces in Thailand, the U.S.-directed war against the people of South Viet Nam,

the U.S. constant support of reactionary governments, Chiang Kai-shek in China's Taiwan, and now the U.S. involvement in India too.

By contrast we see how sanely and brilliantly the Chinese People's Republic works for Peace. Especially just now in the Sino-Indian border dispute. Attacked by India, China defended her borders, but kept repeating her demand to settle by negotiation. Victorious in battle, she did not press her gains but announced a Cease-Fire and Withdrawal, again and again urging friendly negotiations and disengagement of troops. Nehru delays, refuses a clear reply, yet takes time to consult with the American and British military. Do the Indian people realize that now the U.S.A., with her foot inside the door will push in ruthlessly and call the military, political and economic plays? We believe they will, in time.

An ominous picture for the end of 1962? Yes, but the hope is predominant. The peoples of Latin America seethe with struggle for Cuba and for themselves, and no threats or blockades by the U.S.A. can turn that tide. The peoples of Asia and Africa support China's peaceful offers, while India's rulers — no longer "un-aligned" — become isolated as they slip into Washington's pocket. It becomes clear that in all these three continents, the peoples will go ahead faster in 1963 on the business of liberating their countries and building a better life for themselves and thus a better world for all mankind. Their struggles are part of the struggle for world peace; they are, indeed, its reliable vanguard.

So I may close appropriately with: Happy New Year to you in 1963!

FROM A FARM NEAR SIAN

Joan Hinton

We happened to be sitting in the steam heated guest house at Yenan when we first heard the poem.* A clear bright autumn moon had just poked up over the eastern pagoda hill, making the electric lights shining from the hill-scattered caves look like so many stars. We had been standing there in the courtyard watching it all for sometime, listening to the night, listening to all the ordinary evening sounds of such an unordinary place, feeling ourselves so incomprehensibly small compared to the meaning of its past, when coming back into the warm room, we turned on the radio to hear your voice saying, "Yesterday you were the chief of a small green island. . . ." We think this poem of yours is excellent because it so precisely catches the essence of the situation . . . and of course hearing it in Yenan, cradle of the victory of China's revolution, gave it a very special significance.

As for life here on the Sian farm, things are certainly on the move these days. In line with the directives of the tenth plenary session of the Chinese CP central committee this whole huge country is going in for agriculture in an unprecedented way — our farm of course included. Hundreds of healthy, laughing, enthusiastic students have come from the city to join in our production. New Chinese-made tractors and farm machinery of all kinds are on the way. Bulldozers have been leveling the fields day and night preparing them for irrigation while our farm trucks have been put on special duty hauling bricks for new buildings to house our

*See p. 42.

rapidly increasing population of both dairy cows and people. The new thing this year is the stress on technical improvement. The peasants throughout the country, having completed the job of organizing their collective economy, a job which culminated in the consolidation of the people's communes, are now turning to the job of mechanization, of finally and completely liberating themselves from the back-breaking toil that was old China. The whole of the country's industry is being geared to support them in this task. On our farm, people everywhere are thinking up all possible means of mechanizing, especially in those parts of the farm work which require heavy manual labor.

As for me, in line with all this, I am working again on that continuous flow automatic milk pasteurizer which I started in 1958. The main purpose of the machine is to lighten the burden of our dairy workers who now have to dump thousands of pounds of milk a day through our present pasteurizer by hand. We had to stop working on the machine in 1958 because it was so difficult to get parts, but now conditions are much, much better. I can just go to the city and buy all sorts of things I couldn't get before.

As I hunt around for parts, I get a chance to see quite a bit of the city too. It is really amazing how much food there is these days. Literally mountains of Chinese cabbage lie piled on the sidewalks, while meat is sold all over the city and the butcher shops are lined with neat fresh carcasses. There are fruit stands everywhere, selling not only local apples and pears, but oranges and tangerines too, sent up from the south.

As to what the people are thinking, all over the farm and among the workers in the machine shop where I

work, there is constant talk about the international situation. What has struck me most about it all has been that even after India's large-scale invasion of China's border areas, the people everywhere have been much more concerned about the defense of Cuba than about anything else.

One day when I was in the city with my ten-year-old son, taking him to a dental appointment, he suddenly cried out "Look! Look at the parade!" and sure enough, down the street came people marching four abreast all with white caps on their heads. The white caps are worn by the "Hui" people in Sian, a minority nationality of the Mohammedan religion who used to be discriminated against in old China, much as the West discriminates against Jewish people. As they came closer we realized they were demonstrating in support of Cuba. Old men with long thin beards, young people of all ages and description, while scattered through their ranks were all their children, marching erect and earnestly, carrying flags with slogans, and shouting "Long Live Castro! Cuba Yes! Yankees No! U.S. imperialism, hands off Cuba!"

By the time we got out of the dental hospital, the streets were jammed with marchers — all traffic had come to a standstill. There were brigades representing factories, office workers, handicraft cooperatives, and many many groups of housewives, some even pushing baby carriages as they shouted, "Down with U.S. imperialism! Yankees go home!" We had to walk all the way to the outskirts of the city before we could get a bus back and even then we had to wait an hour before one finally came through. As we walked along the country road from the bus stop back to our farm, again we saw people everywhere. These were commune members going home. "Been

watching the parade?" we asked. "No, not watching but marching, demonstrating our support for Cuba," they said.

It had become quite dark by this time. Before long, all the people having branched off here and there to their various villages, we were left alone. As the two of us walked on, I couldn't help marvelling at these people. Only a few days before, India had attacked China all along the whole Sino-Indian border, yet the people here were out demonstrating not against India, but in defense of Cuba! My son suddenly turned to me asking, "But why do their friends take their weapons away?" What could I say? That night as we walked those fifteen *li* home together, I told him in detail the stories of the Chinese and Cuban revolutions. I tried my best to show him that it's the struggles of the people, not weapons, which in the end determine the outcome of history. I think he understood.

As to the feeling among the people here, the workers, the cadres, all the people on our farm strongly believe the road of capitulation to the aggressors is the road to war. World peace may only be maintained on the basis of the dignity, equality, and rights of all nations big or small. As for India, the people are indignant and disgusted at all the hullabaloo and war hysteria being whipped up over there. It is obvious to everyone that the Sino-Indian boundary question is not the kind that should be solved by any means other than friendly negotiation. But if India's rulers bring Western arms into play and make themselves the instrument of Western imperialist attack against China, as they are doing, China will certainly continue to take all necessary steps in self-defense. This too is good for peace. The people here show only the deepest sympathy and friendship for the Indian peo-

ple. They don't want to fight India. They think it is stupid for Asians to fight Asians for the sole benefit of U.S. monopoly capital and the Indian big bourgeoisie. They are doing everything in their power to promote the peaceful settlement of the boundary dispute through mutual discussions in a way that would be fair and acceptable to both sides. There is no hysteria here, nor is there any fear. The people's minds and energies are occupied with the colossal creative problem of the modernization of China's agriculture, with the immediate task of preparing the conditions for an exceptionally good harvest next year.

CASTRO ON TELEVISION

(The poem mentioned is the last stanza of some verses contributed by Anna Louise Strong to the "Support Cuba Poetry Evening" in Peking, and read over the Peking Radio November 1, 1962.)

Yesterday
You were the chief
Of a small, green island,
Leader of not quite
Seven million people.
Today for you
The millions march in China
And in a hundred tongues
They hail your name.
Today you are the Voice
Of the Three Continents,
The Thunder of History

Down the Ages,
The fighting SHOUT
Of men against Aggressors,
In all times and lands,
For the RIGHTS,
Inalienable,
Of MAN!

TEACHER AND HOUSEWIFE IN A PROVINCIAL TOWN (KAIFENG, HONAN)

Shirley Wood

I love the autumn and winter in Honan, once the weather clears. We've had a wet autumn, which no one grudged, for the sake of the wheat next spring, but it's troublesome with the mucky roads and the washing in the house and the cold wet wind down your neck. Now it's over though and the thick snow was the first early snow in so many years. Now the bare, clear sunshine is back and only a thin yellow leaf or two left on the trees except where they stand by a wall in the sunshine, and clusters of bitter yellow berries hanging like cherries from the round grey branches of the chinaberry trees, where the slaty, long-tailed Chinese bluejays crowd in winter to feed. Now it's only the yellow earth, with maybe the flat green furrows of wheat stretching across it, and the grey or red brick houses and the trees like pen-and-ink drawings against the white blue sky, and in the mornings the frost like thin crystal lying in the low places and on the north slope of the roofs. The town has a lovely smell in winter that I've missed in the hard

years, but now it is back again — the smell of the stalls, the roasting sweet potatoes, the chestnuts and peanuts and the steam coming onto the street from the cauldron of fat mutton on the stove behind the doors of the little restaurants. The roasted breads and fried breads and filled buns and dumplings — sweet, salt or meaty, just nice to look at as you hurry down the street wondering if you should spend five cents and where.

No one is planting vegetables now, except a bit of early spinach for the spring, because they are so much trouble and plenty and cheap in the stalls. Even the wheat is just to keep the garden green-looking for the winter. Next spring the seed-peddlers and the man with the sets of pansies and wallflowers and roots of canna and dahlias and rosebushes will be swamped as soon as they get in the gate of our compound, if they get so far through the streets. The young folk seem busy with other things, but the children and old folk love to play with the flowers, and wherever you see a particularly fine bit of garden, there's sure to be an old man in the family. With all our old professors there's talk every spring between the bungalows about how to grow oleanders and who has a fine new chrysanthemum they'll exchange sets of for a bit of mint and did you know that in old Chinese the hickory tree and the day lily represent the father and mother in health and isn't it a chance that a winged hickory seed should have blown among my day lilies and grown there, and can I spare a day lily root next spring? I don't know how, but it seems that now we've caught our breath we're one jump farther on from where we were when we stopped jumping.

* * *

I'm amazed at the way things have come on the market. I was wondering what I'd do about a sweater for Limin, and with the food shortage just comfortably over I thought it would be a few years before we could get good wool. But we got in a lot this autumn, nice and soft and the ration of industrial tickets dropped from fifteen the pound to three, so I've got the knitting to do and maybe enough over for a scarf.

A year ago you had to have a letter of introduction to buy a washbasin or an aluminum pot. Now people are fussy about the patterns on the washbasins and enamel cups and they want something heavier than the pots which were made thin so the aluminum would go round, so the shelves that were padded with empty boxes for show a year ago are filled with pretty, shiny pots and basins and other things and the city department of commerce is worried because their stocks don't move. Used to be that if you wanted to buy something like water glasses you had to be at a store when they arrived and take what you could get for pattern and quality, but now people are getting awfully choosy and looking at the price, I remember the day when you grabbed two and asked the sales girl, "How much do I owe you?"

In our plains wind, a straw hat or umbrella isn't much use in wet weather unless you're going southward, but with the drought we haven't had to worry much about raincoats during the school season. Now it's over, and I have five in school and only three raincoats and my old cape between them and the wet autumn we've had with a fine early snow has put us at our wits' end to keep them dry. Their papa tramped the town up and down last September without finding a child's raincoat, but last Tuesday after I'd been to the dentist I bought a nice heavy

plastic one for Ann, with a hood and schoolbag, dark blue with little flowers pressed into it. Only ten yuan. And the stores were so full of things — more variety than we'd had even before the hard years.

Working girls are buying silk kerchiefs and country farmers can get their velours hats. That was rather funny — a couple of years ago the farmers got tired of wearing cotton padded winter caps, and started buying corduroy ones, round-blocked with thick velours ear-flaps, very posh-looking and warm with the flaps down and velours round the back of your neck when the north wind blew. Stocks were sold out before December, and since then every time you went shopping you'd see farmers coming in asking if the store had any velours hats. Well, now there's enough and to spare.

UNITED STATES BUDGET, 1963

Rewi Alley

Rulers of the world's richest
state, look over their income
reckoning how best to spend in
the coming year; shall it be

on rockets to the moon, space
ships, or more napalm burning
of Vietnamese villagers; blockade,
subversion against Cuba; looting
a prostrate South Korea; planting
new bases in a re-armed Japan
or putting new spy satellites
into orbit; pouring new billions

to ensure India help for an
invasion of China; paying to build
new bases up the Amazon to keep
Brazil's poor, poorer, or for
a nice new nuclear base in Paraguay?

Then of course, a lot of cash
can be spent on meeting CIA
budgets in Laos, Thailand, Malaya
to say nothing of the millions
that can be spent in Africa,
Latin America; the forty billion
needed to plaster armed men
all around the globe, in the air
and under the sea.

Quite a few dollars, too
are needed to provide
cushy corners for party plugs
hangers on of the shiny, plastic
Kennedy Dynasty; then there
are new fascists to be nurtured;
decision made which of the dictators
to be paid in full, which
can be bargained with.

In all, a wide selection;
you pay your money, they
make their choice; you, the
pitiful taxpayers of this
twentieth century whose
Struggle finances all.

Peking, Nov. 20th, 1962

"CUBA TIME" IN PEKING

Sidney Rittenberg

Here in Peking, my hard-working wife, Yü-Lin, and I found months ago that evening snack bars have popped up all over the city, where working people coming off shift or out of theatres can buy piquant noodles from Szechuan, grill-it-yourself mutton from Inner Mongolia, white duck-meat rolls from the famous Peking Duckery, etc. — all for the equivalent of about two bits in U.S. money.

Yes, "every day in every way, things get better and better." Though, strange to say, that isn't what you hear most talked about — it's Cuba. The whole country is in the midst of a ten-day celebration, in which seven hundred million Asians take their collective hat off to seven million Americans (in the broad and original sense of the word), who have looked the Paper Tiger of Wall Street straight in his nuclear teeth, and by their magnificent courage and unity saved their country from invasion.

I remember one November afternoon when Yü-Lin and I, hurrying across town to a friend's house, ran into column after column of Peking people moving out onto the streets. "Listen," said Yü-Lin. "Slogans in Spanish." And she was right — "Cuba Si, Yankee No" shouted the marching young people, workers and women's groups. "Cuba Si, Yankee No" had entered the Chinese language, just as the Cuban partisan songs blaring out from street-side loudspeakers entered the repertoire of popular Chinese music.

We spied a girl we knew with a huge portrait of Castro in her hands, and I engaged her in "provocative" conversation. "Do you think Kennedy will start throwing

H-Bombs over Cuba?" I asked. "They're bluffing," she said. "They're not ready for anything big — probably not even ready to invade Cuba, with the Cubans so firm."

"But some people say," I persisted, "the only choice is between backing down and a thermo-nuclear holocaust." "Some people," was the answer, "think that struggling against war means increasing the possibility of war. We think that by sticking together and struggling against the war makers we can avoid a new world war." This was some time before the famous *People's Daily* editorial — of December 15, entitled, "Workers of All Countries, Unite to Oppose Our Common Enemy!" (In English in *Peking Review*, Dec. 21.)

* * *

And back in our apartment, not long ago, the following little drama was enacted. I call it, "Out of the Mouths of Babes. . ."

Scene: Our home. Myself and 5-year-old daughter, "Little Pusher", just home from kindergarten, sitting cross-legged on a Ming table (dating from Columbus-was-a-pup days), looking at the full spread portrait of Fidel Castro on the cover of her mother's *Youth of China* magazine.

Me: "Do you know who that is?"
LP: (*Loftily*) "Who doesn't know who that is!"
Me: "Well, who is it?"
LP: "It's Ca-ss-te-lo."
Me: "And who is he?"
LP: (*Patiently*) "He's the Chairman Mao of Cuba."
Me: "And what is Cuba?"
LP: "It's a little country of brave people. . . ."

Me: "Where?"
LP: ". . . ."
Me: "Don't you know where Cuba is?"
LP: (*Humiliated silence*)
Me: "Cuba's right next to the United States, don't you know that?" (*A nod in response.*) "It's an island, darling — the whole country is just one island. Do you know what an island is?" (*Vigorous head-shake, business of raising head and placing turned-up nose in position to receive new knowledge.*) "Well, an island is . . ."

And that's **how our child found out about islands.**

Letter Number 6

SOME QUESTIONS ON CUBA

Jan. 25, 1963

Dear friends,

I thought I had covered Cuba in other Letters, especially Nos. 4 and 5. But responsible friends still write that the Chinese "do not seem to realize that if the U.S.S.R. had not 'backed down' on Oct. 28, then" — and they quote Khrushchov — "Cuba would have ceased to exist."

To which I am tempted to say: "Piffle" but I refrain, for the question is a serious one on which honest differences exist. So I say: OF COURSE Khrushchov had to take those missiles out. But WHY did he ever put them in? WHY did he do it without camouflage, their bare bottoms open to the sky as prize for photographers? WHY were they "discovered" just in time for Kennedy to switch from his previous pose of refusing to invade Cuba because her weapons were "all defensive", to the new pose of "having to invade even at risk of nuclear war"? WHY was the withdrawal of missiles — in itself an excellent thing — combined with a long struggle — not yet ended — to force Cuba to "inspection on the spot", the spot being Cuba, which might become unlimited U.N. occupation with the U.N. troops hunting

missiles in caves, making Cuba another Congo and Castro another Lumumba, with Kennedy in occupation via the U.N. without any risk of invasion, and the Latin American Revolution put back at least a decade?

I leave the questions with you, for Cuba is not my field. I suggest you read the *NY Times* Nov. 6 for a full page account of what went on in the White House and you can make up your mind how much Kennedy's talk was bluff, and how surprised he was at the speed with which Khrushchov yielded. Then note how Kennedy now rides high, and gloats in victory and pushes the arms budget, and presses on Viet Nam, Laos and Berlin, and how Khrushchov retreats — or is "more accommodating" on Berlin and nuclear tests. And you may understand why I feel that the world was not saved from nuclear war by K's actions on Cuba, but pushed a little nearer to war by the victory of the imperialist power. And if on this we disagree, I shall not press it. I am no world expert; let us wait and see.

Here I deal only with some slanders against China which I personally know to be lies. China is widely charged with having demanded those missiles and opposed their withdrawal and therefore with "adventurism" and "wishing to plunge the world into nuclear war". In *The Nation* for Dec. 15, for example, Alex Werth gives it as accepted that the missile installation had China's "strong support". I believe Mr. Werth to be honest, but misinformed by malicious people. For the statement I know is untrue.

China has now officially stated in at least two editorials ("Workers of All Countries, Unite to Oppose Our Common Enemy!" and "Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us", both available in pamphlets) that

she "never called for the installation of missiles" and "never opposed taking them away" but objected "to the sacrifice of another nation's sovereignty as a means of reaching a compromise with imperialism". She has added: "We stand for complete ban on nuclear weapons," and "We hold that socialist nations have no need to use nuclear weapons as a gambling counter or for threatening others. To do this would be truly to commit the error of 'adventurism'." These are official words.

For three years I have known that China was against missiles in Cuba, since the time when Guevara came to Peking and I heard Chinese leaders' views on Cuba's proper defense. I knew it also from the way every Chinese friend winced each time Khrushchov bragged of saving Cuba by missiles. I knew it from the shock the discovery of those missiles caused in Peking. At first nobody believed it; they thought it a Kennedy lie. Nobody believed ANY ALLY would be so stupid as to put missiles in Cuba, which could never save Cuba but only provoke attack from America's overwhelming strength, while alienating Cuba's much greater weapon, the Latin American people's support. Discussion raged about how K. could have done such a thing.

When Khrushchov signed up for "inspection on the spot" without even asking Cuba, then words were said about him which I shall not repeat. Cuba's very identity, it seemed, was being obliterated, as a nation and a Revolution; she began to appear in the eyes of the world — and of Latin America, as a piece of change in K's pocket to be traded to Kennedy for kind words. The Latin American Revolution seemed starting down the drain. Then Castro made his famous Nov. 1st speech on TV, refusing unilateral inspection in the name of equality of

sovereign nations, and saving not only Cuba, but the "honor of the people", in the words of a friend. He was saving the Latin American Revolution and world peace.

In all this, no objection was ever heard in China to taking those missiles out. Get them out fast! Not that an angel is saving the world but a comrade corrects a mistake. China's views on Cuba's defense were based, as all of Chinese views are based, on careful and basic political analysis, taking into account the forces and issues of the world, the needs of world peace and progress. From such analysis, Cuba was NOT basically to be handled as a Bastion of Moscow and the socialist camp planted in the Western Hemisphere, protected by missiles and troops from overseas: the logistics and especially the politics were wrong. Cuba is seen as basically the forerunner and first-born of the Latin American Revolution, whose strength lies in keeping so close to the Latin people's hearts that they CANNOT let her down. From this standpoint again the missiles were "all wrong" for they changed Cuba from a brother island supported by most Latins and even some North Americans, into a foreign missile base that almost everyone would oppose.

Such was the analysis that made Chinese think the missiles should never have gone in. But Cuba, as a nation and a Revolution, must be saved. Castro did it by a brilliant complex struggle against the Pact of the Two K's and the U.N. combined, though U Thant, to do him justice, did not seem to press very hard. Castro did it with courage, clarity, revolutionary integrity and a tact very rare in revolutionaries, without criticizing his Ally but reminding the Cuban people of the great generosity of the U.S.S.R., at a moment when they were sore at the loss of weapons and the belittling of their sovereignty.

So Castro became, in China's eyes, a leader of world stature for these are the qualities the Chinese admire and cultivate: courage, clarity, tact and revolutionary integrity. If China doesn't panic over 40 missile bases ending the world, it may be because she lives with hundreds of them trained on her cities from Japan and Okinawa all the time.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

Letter Number 6a

THE RETURN OF THE WEAPONS

Jan. 30, 1963

Dear friends,

One of the most remarkable incidents in that whole amazing Cease-Fire and Withdrawal which China unilaterally declared on the Sino-Indian border was the return of the weapons to India. The story was first told by the Indian side as a complaint against China. On Jan. 8, 1963 a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry in Delhi announced that some army equipment belonging to India had been turned over by the Chinese in a "heavily damaged condition" and that China was clearly doing it "for propaganda purposes".

Following this, Indian newspapers spread the tale as one more evil act by Chinese, whom they accused of various things, ranging from "propaganda campaign" to "a treacherous maneuver" together with other charges that the Chinese had "looted the area", and had "broken their own 'Cease Fire' over thirty times".

China's account was first released January 16 by a spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who said that China had not made public the return of the captured weapons and had not intended to do so, but since

this measure had been "distorted by slander" they now released facts.

After the voluntary Cease Fire (on Nov. 21st), the Chinese government ordered the Chinese border guards to collect the weapons, ammunition and other military supplies which they had captured and return them to the Indian side. This was first done on Dec. 6, 8 and 11 at Limeking, Sati and Mechuka where the weapons were left with local headmen with letters addressed to the Indian authorities, and lists of the military supplies, and instructions to turn them over to the Indian authorities.

In the two larger towns, Walcng and Dirang Dzong, the return was more formal. It took place Dec. 19. Here a much larger quantity of military supplies was handed over to Indian authorities especially sent to receive them, the Chinese having notified the Indian government on Dec. 14 and 16. In these notes China had expressed "the hope that the weapons would not again be used against China and that border clashes would not again occur, since the Sino-Indian border should be settled by peaceful negotiation and could not be settled by armed force".

A list of the returned military equipment was then appended, which had been signed by both sides, stating the quantity and condition of the weapons thus returned. It covered two pages of single-space typing and is too long to give here but it contained items like the following:

75 British-made 51mm mortars (58 in good condition, 17 with parts missing)

54 British-made 81mm mortars (15 in good condition, 36 with parts missing, 3 heavily damaged)

down to smaller items like:

552 Canadian machine-guns (448 in good condition)

2,105 British-made rifles (1,750 in good condition)

22,400 shells (all in good condition)

19,337 hand-grenades (all in good condition)

Over two million cartridges (all in good condition)

Other interesting items were 1,625 army blankets in good condition, 2,410 Indian army uniforms in good condition and 350 worn-out uniforms.

The list was clearly a partial one for it did not contain any motor vehicles of which a considerable quantity — autos, trucks, jeeps and even tanks, were mentioned in a report from Dirang Dzong. But the list was enough to show that the Chinese had returned a large quantity of military supplies, mostly in good condition, to India and had receipts from the Indian officials for it. This was such an unprecedented act in warfare that the question naturally arose: "WHY?"

Before considering this, let us note some details of the turnover, as given by Hsinhua Jan. 17. Despatches had come from the front in December, but had not been released and there had been no intent to release by Hsinhua, until it became necessary to refute the Indian slanders. The first despatch came Dec. 11 from Mechuka, a small place at the furthest reach of the Chinese advance. Here it was related that on Dec. 6 at Limeking and Dec. 11 at Mechuka, supplies had been turned over to local headmen. The list of supplies and the names of the headmen were given. In Limeking the supplies were stored in two warehouses, "neatly packed", "clothing, bedding and parachutes were laid on wooden racks to

prevent mildew". In Mechuka the supplies were in four warehouses. The five headmen counted the supplies before signing for them. An interesting detail is that in Limeking a headman signed by his finger-prints, probably being illiterate. All headmen agreed to hand the supplies over to the Indian authorities as soon as possible.

In Dirang Dzong and Walong the procedure was much more formal. Dirang Dzong especially is a central town for a large area: it is located on the main line of march from Tawang south to Bomdila. The despatch from Dirang Dzong, dated Dec. 19, but not published till Jan. 17, stated that "today supplies were handed over of weapons, munitions and other supplies captured from the Indian troops in the Tawang, Dirang Dzong and Bomdila areas". In other words, the entire line of the main drive.

"The handover took place at Yuwang village, northwest of Dirang Dzong. On a big square the weapons and other supplies lay in good order, 126 artillery pieces, more than 220 light and heavy machine-guns, over 2,200 rifles, semi-automatic rifles and submachine-guns, over 13,000 shells of various sizes, over 1,100,000 cartridges of various sizes, and 117 motor vehicles, 12 road-building machines and two U.S.-made tanks.

"These weapons and vehicles had been cleaned by Chinese frontier guards and glistened in the sun. Passers-by expressed surprise on learning that they were to be returned to India". . . .

At 11 a.m., in accordance with the notice sent by the Chinese government, three Indian administrative officials and five attachés arrived in three jeeps, headed by

F.V.N. Paul, assistant political commissioner of the Bomdila area. Col. Tsai Hung-chuan, a commanding officer of the Chinese frontier guards in charge of the work, informed them of the number and condition of the weapons and expressed an ardent wish for friendship between the Chinese and Indian peoples. He said:

> "China wants to live in peace and friendship with India. The Chinese frontier guards do not want to cross swords. We have always held that the boundary should be settled by peaceful negotiation and that no armed clashes should have occurred. That is why we ceased fire and withdrew of our own initiative. Now, on our government's instructions, we return to you a quantity of captured arms . . . as fresh evidence of our sincere wish for reconciliation."

At 3 p.m., the Indian representatives began to count the supplies item by item, checking on a list furnished by the Chinese in both Chinese and English, and assisted by fifteen captured Indian officers and men, who were released by the Chinese to take care of the weapons. All guns had been cleaned, all weapons and supplies neatly sorted and piled, dangerous articles especially marked, road-building, motor vehicles and tanks cleaned and filled with petrol.

"At the request of the Indians, Chinese soldiers started up and drove the U.S. tanks and two cars picked at random, to show that they were in good working order." (Note by ALS. And perhaps also to allay Indian suspicion that they might be booby-trapped.) Both sides signed the list and the Indian officials drove back to Bomdila in seven of the vehicles that had been handed over.

This impressively simple report is paralleled by a similar report from Walong, at the extreme eastern edge of the disputed area and of the Chinese advance, with only a few differences due to conditions. Because of Walong's distance from the main line, the supplies were smaller, and the Indian officials arrived in three helicopters instead of in jeeps. After handing over the weapons, the Chinese Lt.-Col. Chao informed the Indians: "A helicopter of yours was shot down at Chiva and has been entrusted to the headman of Sati. Please go and get it; it is in serviceable condition." The Indian representative Barluch then gave a receipt for the helicopter also, and shook the hand of the Chinese officer saying: "I thank you on behalf of my government."

The photos I have of Dirang Dzong show far more weapons than the Chinese could well have taken up the mountains. Their choice, realistically, lay between destroying, abandoning to the local tribes or giving to India. Some non-Chinese friends felt they might have given to the local tribes, largely hostile to India. China, it seems, was not "exporting revolution" by promoting disorder though she somewhat raised the status of tribal leaders by making them her go-betweens. She also showed to all a new kind of army. The Indians, fleeing Tawang and Walong, burned supplies and with them many people's houses. The Chinese PLA rebuilt houses and bridges for the people, helped reap the trampled harvests, cleaned the weapons, piled them neatly, and even, God knows where, got petrol for the tanks. It was peace they offered with order.

It was a message of friendship that recognized in India a multi-national state whose tribes China would not

subvert even in the areas she claimed, yet beyond this she signalled a new kind of order to Indians and tribesmen alike. This, I think, is what the "five principles of coexistence" mean.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

Letter Number 7

April 12, 1963

Dear friends,

As I return to Peking, three items hold the news:

1) *Letters between Peking and Moscow have brought a "CEASE-FIRE" IN POLEMICS, pending plans for bilateral talks.*
2) *China's decision to RELEASE ALL CAPTURED INDIAN MILITARY, makes nonsense of Nehru's constant anti-China clamor.*
3) *For the first time in five years the WHEAT is GREEN in Honan!*

I leave the Communist Debate for another letter and take up the Indian border here.

THE RETURN OF THE CAPTIVES AND THE INDIAN DREAM OF EMPIRE

Peking, April 8. China's decision to release forthwith all captured Indian military — Chinese shun the term "prisoner of war" for no war was declared and the men have been treated as uninvited guests by circumstance — was hailed by the *People's Daily* April 3 as "another

major attempt for peaceful settlement". It was sourly noted in the Indian press as "done for propaganda" which of course in part it was. For Chinese have made six spectacular moves in the past half year to tell the Indian people that they want peace and friendship. Such "propaganda" is today a sin in the eyes of the Indian ruling class.

The news is **wildly cheered by the captured Indians** by song and dance in centers in Sinkiang and Tibet, now featured for the first time in China's press. One learns that the men gained an average weight of 5.17 pounds in their five months in a Sinkiang center (western border); that in a center in South Tibet (eastern border) they lived "in large, light houses amid woods and villages, with no barbed wire or pill-boxes to restrain their strolls in forest and along the babbling brook". All centers have respected religious customs, including diets; I have seen photos of great heaps of canned oranges taken to Himalayan snows for Indian religious festivals that required fruit diet. The "captives" exchanged thousands of letters with the home folks in India; when India blocked the postal town toward Tibet, China flew the mail to Peking by special plane and thence airmailed it to India.

Probably no POW camps were ever run in quite this style, but it is an old tradition with the People's Liberation Army to make friends of captured soldiers. Thousands of Japanese captured during the Japanese occupation of China, are today China's best friends in Japan. One wonders how these Indians, so wishfully hailing their homes, will be treated in India.

Will Nehru welcome them back?

China proposed their return five months ago in that same Nov. 21st announcement of Cease-Fire and Withdrawal that astounded the world. China asked that Indian and Chinese officials meet in the border area to arrange details of the Cease-Fire and disengagement including return of captured men. India flatly refused. When Parliament thereafter raised questions about the prisoners, Nehru evaded. The 731 men already released last December — mostly sick and wounded with a few who attended them — were described by Hsinhua as they said goodbye to their doctors, whom many of them embraced. The Western press was not allowed to interview them in Tezpur.

If these men ever reached home or any place where they could talk freely, the Western reporters in India have been lax on their job. The only mention I have found was in the *Sunday Telegraph,* March 17 (British) which said that some people tried to get anti-China statements from the returned captives but gave it up, because the men had nothing but praises for their treatment and wishes for Sino-Indian reconciliation. If the Indians now released do more of the same they may run into trouble. Watch for them! Your watching may save them from the jails and concentration camps in which Indian Communists and Chinese civilian residents have landed, for embarrassing India's anti-China campaign.

There are 3,213 of these men, including one brigadier, 26 field officers and 29 officers of company grade. They are coming down through the passes from the Chinese to the Indian Red Cross, in batches according to location, weather and transport conditions. (As I write, the Chinese have been working hard to clear the snow from Bang La pass for trucks.) These men are only one in

100,000 of India's population but that is enough to dent the war propaganda, **if they are allowed to talk.** Even their mere appearance, if they have gained five pounds since leaving, might blunt the hate-China campaign!

If anything has become clear in the past six months, it is that **China wants peace,** a quiet border and Sino-Indian friendship, while the **Indian ruling class wants tension.** "Neither war nor peace", but tension and a hostile border where no Indians can make friends with Chinese. They want this for many reasons including the billions this policy gets them in Western aid.

Six times in five months China made spectacular moves — some of them unique in history — to reduce border tension. These were:

1) The **cease-fire** declared unilaterally Nov. 21 at the very climax of a military victory which experts considered outstanding in history.

2) The **return of 731 sick and wounded** Indians, December 1962.

3) The **return of captured weapons** in large quantities. (December)

4) The **withdrawal** of Chinese forces from vast areas they had taken, back to the positions they held Nov. 7, 1959, before the conflict began and then 20 km. further back, for **"disengagement".** (Completed Feb. 28, 1963)

5) The acceptance of the **"Colombo proposals"** "in principle", and the offer to refrain from even putting civilian check-posts in the four areas where Cease-Fire arrangements were disputed, provided India did the same. (Jan. 19, 1963)

6) The decision to **release all captured** military personnel. (April 3, 1963)

India's reply to all these moves was to step up the war clamor, to declare that conflict with China would last five, even dozens of years, to throw into concentration camps thousands of Chinese nationals, long resident in India, to refuse the Chinese Embassy access to these nationals, or even lists of their names, to close down Chinese consulates, and seize the branches of the Bank of China, to prevent Chinese nationals from disposing of their property. These and other measures, normally imposed only in major, declared wars, were imposed in India **after** China declared Cease-Fire and began Withdrawal.

Why?

Nehru gives as reason his "loss of confidence" in China, his shock at China's "massive, sudden aggression". India, he says, must be on guard for years and years until she is strong enough to **win!** Nehru **knows** this is nonsense! That he was shocked by China's massive thrust down the Himalayan slope stands to reason. But Nehru knows very well that Chinese were counter-attacking after India had proclaimed and launched a "massive offensive" on all sectors of the border; he also knows the Chinese advance never went an inch beyond the territory all Chinese governments have considered China for centuries, and that most maps, including British-Indian maps, also considered China till very recent years. **Where in all this is Chinese "massive, sudden aggression?"**

That "massive thrust" on the eastern border that brought the Chinese "to the gates of Assam" was Tibetan territory for centuries into which Britain began to penetrate in the 1940's, claiming it by a line drawn by the British officer McMahon which no Chinese govern-

ment ever recognized. Much of it was never even taken by Britain but by Nehru's troops in their surprise attack on Tawang in 1951. This was the area into which Chinese troops made "massive thrust" in their October-November "counter-attack" in 1962, and from which they then at once withdrew, refusing to recover even their own territory by force!

Nehru knows very well that the Aksai Chin plateau (western border) with the Sinkiang-Tibet Highway, was never in history out of China's possession. For a thousand years a caravan route ran here and neither Britain nor India touched it or taxed it. Not until 1954 did India map it as part of Ladakh, and not until 1958 did Nehru officially claim it. Then for three years India built roads to reach and invade an area she had never been in before. In 1961-62 India set up 43 military posts in this area, harassing Chinese posts already there. The Chinese threw them out in November 1962.

* * *

These actions of China and India clearly show:

China wants a quiet border and Indian friendship. For these she will sacrifice much but not everything. She will not herself change the border by force; changes India made by force China does not recognize unless India negotiates them, but meantime India may continue to hold them as a "Cease-Fire" line if she took them prior to 1959. But China will not yield to India, even for a temporary Cease-Fire line, any territory where China in 1959 freed the Tibetan serfs, or any territory which India invaded in the past three years to attack and harass. This, says China, would reward India's aggression and be unjust to Tibetans.

This explains China's attitude to the **"Colombo proposals".** She accepts them "in principle" but makes two "interpretations" which she is ready to negotiate with India but not to accept in advance. The **principles** on which all the six powers that met in Colombo in December at Prime Minister Bandaranaike's personal invitation agreed, were that China and India should jointly negotiate the border, that China's "Cease-Fire" provided an opportune time, and that Western imperialists should not be brought in. To these China heartily agrees! But the proposals contained two "jokers" which would invalidate the "principles" and doom the border to constant tension. Most important was the suggestion that Indian administration share the 20-kilometer-wide corridor vacated by China in places where India had never previously administered. Nehru was not slow to tell Parliament that this was better than India herself had demanded. The Indian press gloated that it would give a base of legality for a new advance from which to plan, not peace, but a new war. Nehru himself rejects the "principles" and spirit of the Colombo proposals but seizes the territorial suggestions as an unexpected bonus, and makes China's refusal to accept them as preconditions of negotiation an excuse to refuse any negotiation at all.

Watch Nehru's words! He learned diplomatic doubletalk from Britain, no mean teacher! He says: "We **cannot** negotiate with China **unless**. . . ." He never says: "We **will** negotiate **if**. . . ." This is the continuous blackmail that never settles permanently. Never has he proposed, or agreed, to settle the border by negotiation; always he proposes to take his claims by "positions of strength", by years of conflict.

Note also that Nehru's demands expand and set no final limits. In 1951 he seized Tawang in surprise attack, gaining territory Britain never held or administered. In 1959-62 he pushed the McMahon Line further north on his maps and also advanced claims — and roads — to Aksai Chin. And now, in 1963, militarily defeated but made bold by "aid" from the West, Nehru states India's interest in "Tibet" which Desai and other Indian leaders make explicit.

All this is evidence that Nehru's India wants
No quiet border, but expanding power!

Knowing, — and saying — that India cannot accomplish this alone, India's ruling class confers feverishly with American and British strategists, seeking "aid" from the West. And Western imperialists cynically seek their own aims through India: a new dominance of Asia by Western imperialism, using Indians as cheap cannon-fodder. This is what worries Pakistan, Nepal, Burma and even at times Indonesia.

Projects already appear in the world's press that go far beyond the border conflict. The plans that appeared from Washington in early April from the visit of Patnaik, Nehru's special envoy, were not dreamed up in a few days or weeks to meet any "Chinese threat on the border". They are old plans that once were called "the American Century", now adjusted to use India instead of China as source of raw materials and cheap soldiers and labor. Some of them were published March 20, 1963 in *Christian Science Monitor.*

"The U.S. . . . will make India a **'deterrent weapon'** against China." India will increase her army from the present half million to two million men and "put it in position on the Himalayas to exert steady pressure and

keep China continuously occupied". For this the U.S. will supply all kinds of mountain equipment and also give training in "guerrilla fighting". But the plans go beyond pressures on China in the mountains. India must "safeguard the independence" of such countries as Burma, Nepal, Malaya. "Independence" was the well-known word to cover Britain's penetration of Tibet!

A naval base planned for the Andaman Islands, east of the Bay of Bengal, with American and British warships admitted to the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal, will "dominate" southern waters as far as the Straits of Malacca, between Malaya and Indonesia. Thus says the *Daily Telegraph.* The West German *DPA* adds that a fleet based there will be able to "stamp out local bush-fighting quickly and efficiently". Are the peoples of southern Asia and the islands to be kept down by H-Bombs in the jungles? **Or what?**

"India has moved closer to the United States", says Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter in early April on an American visit. The *Hindustan Standard* puts it more sharply in an article by Kurga Das, March 28, which declares that Nehru has made clear to his "American friends" that "his distrust of Red China is complete and that he lines up with Washington in dealing with the Chinese dragon".

Such are the long-range dreams of empire for which Nehru and the Indian ruling class keep tension alive on the Sino-Indian border and which demand not only permanent hostility to China, but the crippling of hundreds of millions of the Indian people under burdens of taxation and militarization, and the sacrifice eventually of millions in war. The Chinese leaders have a greater fellow-feeling for the welfare of the Indian people than

the Indian ruling class shows. This appears not only in the many appeals by Chou En-lai for a peaceful negotiation of the border, for the sake of the more than a billion people in China and India, but even in details of the treatment of captives.

The dream of imperial power — in which the Indian ruling class, once the junior partner of Britain, now proposes to become junior partner of the U.S.A. — may bring great suffering and slaughter. Already the nearer nations — Pakistan, Nepal, Burma, Cambodia — have taken warning; their press denounces, not "China's aggression", but "Indian expansionism". Already the Moshi Conference of Afro-Asian Solidarity last February, took sides against India's demands, even when India tried to put them over by "walking out" of the conference for several days. Here is no space to report that conference, which was badly reported in the West, but one must note that it put the voice of the Afro-Asian people on record in favor of a joint negotiation of the border by China and India, and against any intervention in Africa or Asia by the West.

It is too late in the day for empires!

TIBET—FARCE AND REALITY!

This past March 10 in New Delhi, a group of Tibetan nobles who once owned lands by the square mile and human serfs by the thousand, but who now are emigrés sheltered by the Indian government and used by Washington and Indian leaders for anti-China campaigns, celebrated the anniversary of their Rebellion, four years

ago in Lhasa, by announcing a new "Tibetan Constitution", in "the name of the Dalai Lama", in phrases tailored to affect the West! Except for this use, **the act was farce!** For these are the diehard serf-owners, who refused Peking's offer to buy their properties that the serfs might be emancipated, because they chose serfdom forever as the Tibetan "way of life". Their Rebellion was put down fast, having little support from the people, since many even of the nobles were ready to sell their property and enter the modern world. One of these "progressive" nobles gave me the reason: "Anyone who reads knows that you can get a better life from one modern power-plant than from a thousand barefoot serfs".

Thus was achieved a relatively bloodless "democratic reform" by Peking's generosity in purchasing lands and giving them without cost to the former serfs, and by Peking's quick suppression of diehards who rebelled.

When I visited Lhasa in August 1959, the only American woman who ever made that trip, with 19 reporters from a dozen lands, we were greeted at the airport, 15,000 ft. elevation, with oxygen flasks and the greater stimulus of words: "A million serfs have stood up! They are burying the old serfdom and building a happy tomorrow!"

* * *

This past March 10 in Lhasa, the Great Prayer Festival called Monlam, which in 1959 was made the cover for Rebellion, was celebrated with a blaze of lights. Not only the thousands of butter-lamps in Jokhan Temple, the holiest place in Tibet, but the brighter "lantern trees", three storeys high in the streets, for Lhasa has a new

power-plant and many electric lights. The Panchen Erdeni, by holy tradition equal "spiritual brother" of the Dalai Lama, and presently spiritual leader and temporal chief of local government, spent the usual 15 days in meditation in his palace, and then emerged to read the Sutras and give alms to the Jokhan monks. Nine lamas were ordained to the highest rank of "geshi", top degree in Tibetan theology, and eight of these were "poor lamas" who formerly hardly dare aspire since "contributions" were mandatory to such high religious rank.

The year's event was the holding of the first **elections** ever held in Tibet by universal suffrage. These have been going on at township level since last October, and now the township congresses are electing the county congresses. Representatives of all classes sit in these governments, nobles side by side with former serfs. Women also are elected; in Loka area 30 percent of the district chiefs are women, many of them former serfs. Loka boasts the first election of a county government, with a woman former serf as chief!

Everywhere the harvests are better, since land is now in the hands of the tiller, the state gives better seed and iron implements, and the old superstition that "iron poisons the soil" is dead. Shigatse district, the seat of the Panchen Erdeni, reports the fourth consecutive bumper crop. Loka, granary of Tibet, on the borders of India has the same. Its grain runs 25 bushels per acre, which is 33 percent higher than in 1959; cattle have increased by 20 percent. Schools and health measures increase even faster. In Shigatse the one primary school, run in 1959 as experiment, has grown to 100 primary schools and the first graduates from the first middle school have appeared!

Throughout Tibet, the long decline of the population has ended, for the starved, brutal life of serfs is over, while modern medicine brings epidemics under control.

Such is the reality of new Tibet!

THE WHEAT IS GREEN

For the first time in five years the winter wheat is REALLY GREEN in Honan, central grain-grower on the North China Plain. Sid Rittenberg, travelling south by fast express, — only half a dozen stops from Peking to Wuhan — wrote me in early April: "It is a green carpet, lush and thick, ankle-deep north of the Yellow River, and knee-high through South Honan! Often the rows march straight over the horizon, as if without boundary! One sees several kinds of collective labor in the fields: a production team *en masse*; groups of ploughmen, each driving two oxen with plough, several such teams in a field; ten to twenty women and old folk pulling around an old-style cart with manure, nobody tugging hard but all wanting to be out in the field. Despite the long cotton shortage, nobody seems ragged.

"Liberation clearly brought trees to the North China Plain. When I passed this way in 1948, the treeless land looked desolate even with crops. Now one is seldom out of sight of trees, in rows along roads or in orchards, now blossoming. Little stations where we don't stop show heaps of apples for sale. At every stop our passengers rush for the famous Honan roast chickens, luscious brown at 1.20 to 2.00 yuan. In front of the Wuhan

restaurant a sign in fresh chalk read: "Good news! Rice and flour products sold upstairs without coupons; no advance in price!"

My own trip across China from extreme South to Peking confirms Sid's observations. Grain and vegetables are everywhere plentiful and cheap. Meat and fish seem everywhere available, meat more limited or expensive but fish abundantly bred in new reservoirs.

As result, the Peace Committee's staff no longer give time to raising vegetables, rabbits and "personal chickens", but plant apple and pear trees to beautify the yard.

PERSONAL NOTE

I began these letters last September for a few friends. They expanded; I might even say "exploded"! Newspapers printed them in Djakarta, Colombo, Ghana, Australia, New Zealand; friends in the U.S.A. mimeographed them for discussion groups. Already I am accused of "subverting" Chile; somebody sent ten "Letters" there! All this is cheerful to hear. But now come people who want to "subscribe". I appreciate the compliment, but — take it easy!

No money you could pay can make me write every month on the dot. The best we can hope is ten "Letters" a year — irregularly. These cost about 12 fen per copy to print and 54 fen to airmail; which totals about one pound sterling for ten airmailed issues. If you want to "pay your way" on that basis, make checks to "Letter from China". NOT to me personally; I don't want to keep signing my name. Your letters may influence the subjects I handle, the choice between mimeographing and printing, and whether I also ask friends to write. No back copies available now; we may reprint them.

But — don't expect personal replies.

Special to U.S. AMERICANS! If you live blockaded in our good, old U.S.A., **you can't subscribe!** Don't try; it's against U.S. law to send money to China. Even if we go to some pains to deal through the two firms licensed to import periodicals from China, the money goes into an account blocked by Uncle Sam. What fun is in that?

Sometime somebody may publish in the U.S.A. charging to cover the costs. Till then, resign yourself to getting it as gift from me, not to you but to educate my country! Calm your conscience, if any, by doing as much for somebody else. You can have what copies you want on following rules. One to five copies go airmail; bigger bundles ordinary mail. Don't ask me to promote it to long lists of people; send for copies or reprint and promote it yourself.

Yours — and where do we go from here?

Anna Louise Strong

Letter Number 8

May 15, 1963

Dear friends,

The chief news as seen from Peking is, in mid-May:

1) *In* **Laos** *the U.S.A. seeks by bribery, intrigue and assassination what she failed to get by civil war and the Geneva Conference. Dangerous to peace!*
2) *China's chief of state* **Liu Shao-chi** *visits Indonesia, Burma, Cambodia, Viet Nam. Joint statement with Ho Chi Minh very important, no space to comment here.*
3) *Weather still smiles on* **crops; consumer goods** *flood the land.*
4) *Conference of* **Communist Parties** *of U.S.S.R. and China set for July 5, see below.*

COMMUNISTS DEBATE *MAN'S WAY* THROUGH THIS EPOCH OF REVOLUTIONS AND WARS

Letters about the Great Communist Debate come to me from all the world, especially from Americans. Some

express panic lest "UNITY" be lost. A man from Vancouver speaks of "regrettable, internecine differences, now, let us hope, a thing of the past", and I smile wryly, for the discussion is barely beginning. Others welcome "this clearing of the air". From New York to California they report that discussions go on over coffee cups and other beverages wherever Progressives gather. "The Progressives have come alive to Marxist theory," one writes. "It was high time."

I am especially moved by a woman in Los Angeles who begs my assurance that "this quarrelling will soon stop", and adds: "Our paramount concern is not who is right but that 'UNITY' be preserved. It does not so much matter that leaders in the U.S.S.R. and China have different views on some basic matters, but our hopes for the world would be STRICKEN if the socialist world should split in two." (Capitals are hers.)

How can I assure her? I cannot tell her what to believe. Too many already make up their minds by rubber stamp. I can at most tell the great importance of this debate and what it seems to me to be about. Perhaps I may refute a few slanders and give a few facts that may help. I shall not even try to tell her "China's case". China has done that already in eight pamphlets that for three months circle the world in 14 languages. As for Khrushchov's views, they have been in *World Marxist Review* for years and even filled pages of *NY Times*.

I shall tell my friend: Do not expect this discussion to be quickly over. This is not just "quarrelling". This is an attempt, in a dangerous epoch, to chart **man's way.** This is a quest that comes down ages, sought by all religions and philosophies. Since Marx, some people seek

the way by analysis of class struggles and lessons from history. Communists call it prosaically "the Party Line".

I shall tell her next: The debate need not indulge in name-calling, slanders, dirty tricks and expulsions. These are harmful but in the end injure chiefly the perpetrators. When organizations built by years of devoted labor throw out members, this is loss. But clarity of thought and the awakening of the human spirit are greater values. Revolutionaries strong enough to risk expulsion will go on organizing under new forms. It will not set back the world Communist movement.

I shall tell her third: This will strain the unity of the socialist camp but will not break it. **All** people in the socialist camp want unity. They will see to it.

And last I shall say: One thing might be worse than **disunity** in the socialist camp; that would be **unity of the socialist camp against the world revolution.** Now in our time when two-thirds of the world's people on three great continents rise up and seek **the way**, it is hard if they hear conflicting voices, but it would be worse to hear only **one voice and that one wrong!**

I feel for this friend because I myself not long ago thought that ideological differences didn't much matter. Then I learned how the Chinese viewed it. It was late summer of 1960 when Khrushchov cracked down on China's economy. An American weekly — I think *Newsweek,* claimed he said in Bucharest: "I have means to bring them to their knees." One doesn't believe *Newsweek,* but those words stuck because he was so clearly trying it. Within a month he jerked out all Soviet specialists from the big constructions and enterprises all over China and stopped certain deliveries on machines, spare parts and services that had been contracted.

I never got the full picture, for the Chinese wouldn't talk about it. But nobody could miss it when great housing areas, built for Soviet experts all over China, went dark. Or when Peking and Shanghai auto-bus lines cut services and ran with great plastic bags of sewer-gas on their roofs for want of gasoline; or when the swank Turbo-jets that made the Peking-Canton run in four hours were parked on the edges of airports — dangerous for lack of servicing. Or when tractors halted in fields in the midst of the drought, lacking parts. Chinese refused all details, saying this was best "in the interests of the unity of the socialist camp and the reputation of the U.S.S.R." Not to this day do they ever blame those troubles on the U.S.S.R., but only that "some comrades behaved badly".

In the midst of all this a Chinese leader invited me to dinner. An ideological discussion had been going on that I hardly noticed. So I was taken aback when my host suddenly said: "It seems you are disturbed by the ideological differences." I tried to find words.

"No, I don't think the ideological differences worry me. They seem different sides of the same coin. Moscow sits in the United Nations and deals with Eisenhower and DeGaulle; perhaps they can persuade him to act better to Algerians. China is a U.N. outlaw; she can help Algerians directly. It's a useful division of labor, as long as Moscow and Peking cooperate. What disturbs me is this economic crack-down. If Khrushchov had any regard for the strength of the Socialist Camp, he would pour money and machines and experts into China. Nobody does so much on so little as the Chinese. But he tries to ruin you and injures the socialist camp thereby. I am much upset by such action from a Communist."

My host replied, almost sternly: "**We** do not thus regard it. An economic setback can be relatively soon overcome. A mistaken 'Line' could curse our children's children. The Second International disintegrated because of a mistaken Line, with grave results for the world. The results would be wider now."

My mind flashed to 1914 when the Social Democratic Parties betrayed their international theories, and voted war credits, each in his own land, giving the green light to the First World War. I saw that the "wider results" meant the danger of nuclear war for the world. My host was saying that no economic loss to China could be mentioned in the same breath with China's convictions on **the way** to defend world peace.

That is the rank the Chinese give to ideology.

Man's way to peace and progress — in short, the world revolution — takes precedence of everything else.

Such is the importance the Chinese give to finding and holding **the way** through this epoch of conflict, which Marx and Lenin foresaw as a possible hundred years of revolutions and wars, into the Great Harmony, as the Chinese often call it, of the future Communist world where wars shall cease.

* * *

For a century Marxist ideology has advanced through polemics; the past fifty years have seen three Great Debates. The first was between Lenin and Kautsky and other "revisionists" of the Second International; it led to the October Revolution and the forming of Communist Parties all over the world. The second was the debate in which Stalin won over Trotsky; this led to the building of the world's first socialist state, encircled by capitalist foes. At the same time Mao Tse-tung's fierce

ideological struggles with Left and Right deviations, integrated Marxist thought with the concrete problems of China, and led to the liberation of China, the world's first victorious anti-imperialist revolution. This broke the encirclement of the U.S.S.R. and tripled the population of the socialist camp to 40 percent of the world's people.

Today's Great Debate takes place when imperialism disintegrates on a world scale, yet still holds the H-Bomb in its hands, when two-thirds of the world's people surge forward in anti-imperialist struggles, in Asia, Africa, Latin America. This debate must concern the triple relation of these awakening peoples, the dying but still deadly imperialism, and the socialist nations. It must consider the laws and limits of coexistence, the relation of the national liberation struggles to world peace.

This debate will not be a short one. Even the agenda is not yet agreed. The Chinese Party, in its March 9th letter about the Bilateral Conference, proposed five main subjects for discussion, the first of them being: "The strategy and tactics of revolution in the contemporary world", which is not something to settle in a week. The other four subjects concerned: opposing imperialism and defending world peace, the liberation struggles of oppressed nations and people, the strengthening of unity and power of the socialist camp and the strengthening of the unity of the world Communist movement. The Chinese added that any point on which agreement could not now be reached, might be laid aside for later conferences. The Soviet reply on March 30 also came out with five subjects for discussion, in which "revolution" was conspicuously omitted, being replaced by "coexistence and disarmament".

Why is the debate needed? Let us look at Iraq. In 1958 a colonel named Kassim overthrew an evil ruler who served Western oil interests; the Iraqi Communists were his strongest political support. A united front. True to his type, Kassim moved to the Right, began to disarm all "people's organizations". The Communists, dutiful to Khrushchov's ideas, allowed him to do it. They were publicizing Iraq's "peaceful transition" just before they were all slaughtered — thousands of Communists and Kassim too — by local friends of the U.S. oil interests. This was a major tragedy for the people of Iraq. **Moral** . . . in a united front, it is no kindness to your ally to let him disarm you.

It might have happened in Cuba, had not Castro held out against U.N. unilateral inspection and thereby saved the sovereignty of Cuba, instead of being handed over to Kennedy as the Congo was handed, via the U.N., without even needing American troops. It could happen in Laos right now if the Pathet Lao gave up their arms. The Pathet Lao won't; they learned from China.

China learned the hard way the strategy of revolution, in twenty years of armed struggle, by mistakes that cost hundreds of thousands of lives. Some of these mistakes were China's own, some were not. "You have a united front with Chiang; support the head of state." This was the "Wang Ming Line" during the early years of the war against Japan. The New Fourth Army's Deputy Commander, Hsiang Ying, followed it into a trap where his forces were slaughtered. The leader of one detachment followed Mao's line instead; he avoided the trap, eventually took East China, Nanking, Shanghai and is today China's Foreign Minister Chen Yi.

The problem repeats now on a world scale. The anti-imperialist revolution begins in a nation as a "national front" which contains military men, landlords, bourgeois and intellectuals as well as workers and peasants. **Who** leads? Usually a military man or upper-class ruler at first — Chiang, Nehru. But **what** is the backbone? Usually the hunger of peasants for land. What shall be the relations between groups and how shall these relations develop? The rising peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America desperately need to know. The Russians never had the problem; their revolution was short, and was not a revolution against foreign imperialist rule and any men now alive who led it have been tossed aside by Khrushchov. The Chinese have rich experience. The men who developed China's strategy are still alive. Other people should be able to learn from China's experience.

So now the great debate will not cease until it moves through struggle to a new unity as Marxist debates have done before.

* * *

SEVERAL MISCONCEPTIONS KEEP MANY PEOPLE FROM EVEN LOOKING AT THE DEBATE . . . I briefly note a few:

1) **Some think this is primarily a "quarrel between China and the U.S.S.R." affected by "national interests" of territory, trade, power.** It isn't. I have shown above how firmly China subordinates "national interests" to questions of basic theory. The debate is worldwide; it has been gathering for years in world conferences. Chinese tried to prevent it from polarizing as a debate between China and Russia; for a long time they only argued against

"Tito". An American friend in Ghana thinks the true polarization of debate is on racial lines, but my Chinese friends think this would be even more dangerous to the world than a "Sino-Soviet" debate. The debate should be seen not as China against Russia, not as white peoples against colored, but as two different concepts of **"the way", revolutionary and non-revolutionary.**

2) **Some think China "diverged" from the "general Communist path".** This is not true. Khrushchov **diverged** and was proud of it. In the 20th Congress of the CPSU Feb. 1956, he consolidated power by attacking Stalin and portraying the entire period of socialist building in the U.S.S.R. as unrelieved blackness to which the Khrushchov period was "the Dawn". Khrushchov's new ideology — now called "creative Marxism-Leninism" — shook the entire world movement, and encouraged counter-revolution in Hungary and trouble in Poland that nearly came to armed clash. China moved to consolidate "unity", both by the two pamphlets on "Historical Experiences of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and by Chou En-lai's personal visits to Warsaw and Budapest. Khrushchov was grateful to China at the time.

A common "Line" was set by two international conferences, in 1957 and 1960, which produced the Moscow Declaration and the Moscow Statement of 81 Parties, unanimously agreed by all, as the "world Communist path". China accepts them and follows them. Khrushchov violates them unilaterally as he chooses and then expects the world Communist movement to go along because of the prestige of the U.S.S.R. China mentions some violations in the pamphlet "Whence the Differences?" (Feb. 27, 1963). I note the unilateral assault on Albania in Oct. 1961, the re-endorsement of Yugoslavia in 1962,

and especially that, after the Moscow Declaration and Statement clearly stated that imperialism, led by U.S. imperialism, is the main world danger, and "as long as imperialism exists there will be soil for aggressive wars", Khrushchov exalted "the spirit of Camp David", spoke of Eisenhower as a peace-lover, and promoted the idea that all revolutionary struggles are dangerous, and may escalate into world war, while even with imperialism it is possible to secure by negotiation a "world without wars".

Statements that China thinks world war "inevitable", or even "desirable", that she opposes "coexistence" and "disarmament", are plain **lies.** China promoted "the five principles of coexistence" before Khrushchov came to power. China stands for total destruction of nuclear arms, the abolition of all foreign military bases around the world; she has repeatedly proposed a "nuclear-free" zone in Asia and the Pacific, including the U.S.A.

But:—

a) Is **coexistence** to be seen as a policy whereby socialist nations keep out of war with capitalist nations by mutually respecting each other's sovereignty and not intruding in each other's internal affairs, or as a "new era" introduced in Camp David whereby "only the heads of governments . . . invested with great power . . . are able to settle complicated international problems" (Khrushchov in speech to Supreme Soviet, Oct. 31, 1959)? Shall Kennedy and Khrushchov "divide and rule" the world?

b) Does **disarmament** start by abolishing worldwide foreign military bases which imperialists maintain or by suppressing national revolutions by U.N. police?

c) Is **"world peace"** defended by activating all "peace forces" — the socialist camp, the national liberation move-

ments, the revolutionary struggles of workers and the peace movements generally — to increase joint pressure against imperialism until they bring it down, or by deals between the strongest socialist power and the strongest imperialist power imposed on the lesser nations?

These are some questions for the Great Debate.

3) **Some people say China has few followers.** This also is not true. Marxist debates do not vote by show of hands; they argue till unanimity is reached. But indications exist that show clearly where many Parties stand. Those who have flatly stood up for China's views form a minority of Communist Parties, but contain a majority of Communist members in the socialist camp and in the world. China's 17 million Communist members form nearly half of the 35 million in the socialist camp. Add 1,160,000 from Korea and 60,000 from Albania to get more than a majority.

On the world scale, add Indonesia, whose more than two million members make the largest Communist Party outside the socialist nations, and you hardly need Japan's strong Party of 100,000, and New Zealand's small but energetic Party, and various small Asian Parties, mostly illegal, to get more than half the estimated 40 to 42 million Communists in the world. Moreover, many Parties whose central committees attacked China contain groups of members now endorsing China's views; the *New York Times* May 2 noted that China's views are gaining converts.

China's views have been largely unknown in much of the world. Now they are out very widely. They make converts. An American friend in Ghana wrote me, on seeing three of the Peking pamphlets: "It is clear that we have not been getting China's views on ANYTHING."

A young woman in New York wrote with joy: "What lovely and accurate mincemeat they make (of the opposition). The greatest clarity of thought, simplicity of expression, and creative Marxist-Leninist practise seem to be Chinese."

Never in history has there been such an appetite for ideology as the demand for these pamphlets shows. In part it is due to their clear thinking, but basically it is due to the worldwide hunger for any hint of **the way.** This is not the only way and certainly not the final way, which can only be charted when the best brains of the most progressive leaders of all the world's peoples combine. But it is the way as learned by one-fourth of earth's people in more than a century of anti-imperialist struggles, scrupulously analyzed by the leaders who won final victory and who place **man's way to peace and socialism** above the economic advance of their own land.

China publishes all sides of the Great Debate. Some other Parties publish both sides; New Zealand's does. But none with the exhausting thoroughness of the Chinese. Page after newspaper page of Khrushchov's long speeches, Togliatti and Thorez, the attacks on China by 44 Communist Parties, including the CPUSA, all see print in major newspapers. At first the editors answered the attacks; in the end they ran out of time and space. The last of the 44 attacks were published with only the comment that the Chinese people had to know everything and this was it.

Chinese study it diligently. They work harder at Marxism than any people I know. An American friend in Peking told me he found it hard to absorb all the ideology. "But our cook," he said with awe, "lets our potatoes scorch on the stove while he masters Togliatti's

structural reform and Italian Constitution." Chinese intend to qualify for the Great Debate. For **the world revolution is thundering down time's corridors.**

* * *

WILL THE SOCIALIST CAMP BE SPLIT?

If they argue so hard and rank ideology so high, why will not the socialist camp split?

1) The only splits that have threatened the socialist camp came from Khrushchov and were mended by the help of China. These were in 1956-57 in Hungary and Poland, and in 1961 when Khrushchov tried to expel Albania. Chou En-lai helped with the consolidation of unity in Hungary and Poland, and stood up for Albania. One result: the East European nations followed Khrushchov only half way; all of them kept their embassies and trade relations with Albania, only withdrawing ambassadors. Lately Rumania returned her ambassador. Albania stays in the socialist camp after all.

2) China will not break the Sino-Soviet Alliance; Khrushchov would not be able to. He didn't succeed in bringing even Albania "to its knees" but only threw away the China market and is probably sorry he did.

3) The Soviet and Chinese people both deeply know their need of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, for their own security, for the unity of the socialist camp and for the peace of the world. Any leader of either nation rash enough to tamper with this Alliance will be stopped by his own people. No leaders are omnipotent or all-wise.

The Chinese, confident that this basic unity is unbreakable, prepare to argue as long as need be to reach unanimity about **the way,** that must not only unite the socialist lands but work out forms for their Alliance

with the national liberation movements and the workers' revolutionary movements, on a basis not of dominance but of equality and mutual benefit. Marx and Lenin both took a lifetime at it, but today it shouldn't take so long.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

P.S.

MAY DAY IN PEKING—FAKE AND FACT

The day was brilliant. I spent the morning in the parks watching the merry-making, and the evening on top of Tien An Men, seeing fireworks. Ten days later a clipping gave me the news as wired by UPI from Tokyo:

"Communist China celebrated May Day with mass parades, giant pictures of Stalin, and verbal attacks on India, the United States and Soviet Premier Khrushchov.

"The Communist 'New China News Agency' . . . indicated that the Russians were absent from the main reception on the eve of the holiday.

"The Chinese reaffirmed their 'militant friendship' with their tiny European ally Albania, an outcast in the East European Communist bloc.

"Peking's blast against Khrushchov's policy of coexistence was shown by" — the alleged quotation given didn't mention Khrushchov, coexistence or May Day.

* * *

Astounded by this description, I checked my memory with friends and the press and confirm:

1) There were **no** "mass parades". For three years China's May Day goes in, not for parades of military and economic might, but for dancing, playing games and seeing shows in parks all over town. Over three million people came out, half the city's population. The nearest thing to a "mass parade" was when sportsmen, dancers, acrobats and children from the central parks poured into the Tien An Men Square for an hour at noon to show their floats. These were good.

2) There was **one** "giant" picture of Stalin. It stands in a row with Marx, Engels, Lenin, all pictures of equal size, historic revolutionary leaders, looking down on the square at all celebrations. There were no others; China's May Day does not feature individuals, but flags, drums, firecrackers, tissue paper flowers, children.

3) The "main reception" was not held by the state but by "people's organizations", chiefly the Trade Unions. The "New China News Agency" published at length the list of foreign trade-union delegations, with names of leaders. First in the list, as usual, came the Russians, preceded only by the World Federation of Trade Unions. Inquiry showed the Soviet Ambassàdor also there.

4) There were **no** "verbal attacks" and **no** speeches, except for a fairly long toast by Liu Ning-I, chairman of Central Trade Unions, and a short one by Chou En-lai. Neither mentioned India, Albania or Khrushchov.

The only mention of the United States was indirect when Liu toasted "the Cuban people for frustrating U.S. imperialism's war provocations". The only reference to "militant friendship" was in Chou's brief, eloquent toast "to the liberation of the working class . . . and the oppressed nations and people, to world peace, to the militant friendship of the people of all countries".

* * *

I never saw such clamorous joy as I saw in the parks that morning. I never knew there were so many kinds of dances and games. Or that children by thousands could sit on the ground so neatly on handkerchiefs to applaud the clowns and acrobats. I never knew there could be such thousands of children moving happily and freely, gaily dressed and well behaved.

In the evening the foreign guests saw the fireworks from the top of Tien An Men. We drank tea and munched sweets at little tables, applauding dancers and jugglers in intermissions. In the great square below and far out the converging boulevards, half a million people sat on the ground or danced, watching the fireworks too.

A big New Zealand trade-unionist strolled with Rewi Alley to the parapet and flung his arm out over the crowd and the mist of lights that covered the city, and up to the red, green and golden bursts of fire that obscured the stars: He sighed:

"No b — bastard in New Zealand will believe it!" —

Try again, UPI! It must be hard to imagine from Tokyo.

A.L.S.

Letter Number 9

July 3, 1963

Dear friends,

I shall not comment on the world headlines, how Kennedy woos Khrushchov in early June to isolate China and later jilts him to woo Adenauer to isolate DeGaulle.

Nor shall I predict the ultimate result of Moscow's refusal to publish China's June 14th letter, and the expulsion of Chinese Embassy personnel for distributing it, with its **"Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement".*** **YOU** *can make up your minds on these as well as I.*

It is time for me, after eight "Letters from China" that told chiefly of relations to India, the U.S.S.R., the world, to write of China's own land. For all the chess-moves of power politics may be of less permanent significance than the changes in the **Chinese land** *in the past five years.*

THE ECONOMY AND LIVELIHOOD OF CHINA THIS SUMMER

For months I have gathered data directly and from friends in Peking and down country. After discussion I summarize: The economic news this summer is good crops, large quantities of food in both city and countryside, more and better consumer goods at lower prices and a perceptible advance in rural modernization.

Little is heard of heavy industry — no figures of total steel production — but it is clear that the tens of thousands of new tractors, four times as many in the field as in 1957, and the hundreds of thousands of irrigation pumps, 20 times as many as in 1957, do not come out of thin air. This is confirmed by a glimpse of the home-made but effective new automation at the Wuhan Steel Works, by the Taiyuan Plant turning out huge cranes for giant industry, etc. Joan Hinton of Sian and Shirley Wood of Kaifeng are more thrilled by the local enterprises, the Sian Enamel Works and the Kaifeng Farm Machinery Works, that grew from scratch.

China's friends tend to grow lyrical. Thus a correspondent from Cuba writes me from a tour of the country: "A new Big Leap is in making. **Collective economy has passed the test; the communes are stronger than ever. God bless this people for letting me see all these marvels."** Even the skeptics give tribute. A none-too-friendly diplomat who two years ago thought the farm situation "catastrophic", now judges:

> **"China may well be the first socialist country really to solve the problem of agriculture."**

The Chinese themselves are modest. They make no claim to "bumper crops" and release few statistics. They say that each year now is better than the last, that a "sound base has been built for an independent modern industry". Then they add: "We are still a poor and technically backward country; the modernization of our agriculture has only begun and will take decades."

*Later published and attacked on July 14th.

But nobody can miss the confidence and sense of well-being that grows across the land. In my opinion, in this summer of 1963, China's economy is not only sound but advancing and its people have more hopeful prospects and in some ways already live better than at any time in the recent past. "Even the Manchu bannermen, once supported by the imperial court as a privileged group, live better now through the communes than under the Kuomintang," said Rewi Alley after visiting Manchu areas near the Eastern Tombs.

The steady improvement and sound condition is due, not only to Nature's favors — despite generally good weather, several large areas this year struggle with drought or excessive rains — and not to outside aid, but to the self-reliant labor and ingenuity of the Chinese people and the sound policies of their leaders, first expressed in the Big Leap and the Communes and then in the disciplined planning of the three "disaster years". Asian economists, in fact, are more impressed by the way China handled the hard years than even by the miracles of the Big Leap.

"You had three bad crop years but you never begged for a dollar. And now you advance on your own power. What other nation can do that?"

THE BIG LEAP (1958-60)

Since it is fashionable to say abroad that China made some advance prior to 1958 but then "went crazy" with the "Big Leap" and the Communes and had nothing but setbacks, I shall confine most of my discussion to the years from 1958-62, which are also the years of the Second Five-Year Plan. I begin with the Big Leap as I saw it in 1958. The posters showed a Giant Man bestriding a

river and cleaving a mountain, saying: "Here I Come!" The theme of the popular songs was Man's Power, by collective labor, to remake the world.

In half a year half a billion peasants poured into 26,000 communes. The harvest that year was truly terrific but nobody ever knew how big. Some communes built railroads with wooden rails to transport it to market; some people left it lying in the fields and went off to make steel. Sixty million people made steel that autumn in home-made furnaces. Honan Province "shot a sputnik" which meant that they worked from midnight to midnight and claimed to have made more iron in that single day than the whole U.S.A. makes in a normal day. Then 75 million people went for the winter to build reservoirs and irrigation systems.

The world ridiculed, especially when China announced, a year later, that the 1958 grain statistics were wrong and much of the iron produced was bad quality. But the irrigation systems begun in 1957 and 1958 withstood the first shock of the "disaster years" and have been steadily expanding to the present day to be now completed by the 200,000 to 300,000 electric pumps. Every county in China today knows how to make iron and steel and where to find the nearest coal and iron ore. Even every township today develops industry suited to its needs. This was the legacy of the Big Leap.

Nobody who lived through that Big Leap forgets it. They say: **"The greatest thing we learned was the power that lies in the Chinese people. We also learned the need of better plans."**

The "Big Leap" was ended for the time by natural disasters and by the imbalance of its own gains.

In three years steel production tripled from 5.35 million tons in 1957 to 18.45 million in 1960. General industrial output kept pace, attaining in two years more than had been planned for five years. To achieve this, tens of millions of peasants poured into the cities for jobs; everyone believed that the grain problem was licked. Then in the same year of 1960 in which steel output tripled, the worst droughts, floods, hurricanes of a century struck 60 percent of China's cultivated area, 40 percent of it "seriously". It became clear that the farms could not feed the expanded industries either with grain for the workers or materials for the machines.

Grain became the first priority.

The three "disaster years" overlapped the last year of the Big Leap, for crop difficulties began with harvest of 1959 and continued till autumn of 1962. But industrial production swept forward through 1960 by its momentum, with some carry-over of grain from 1958. Thus the worst grain shortage was in winter of 1960-61. From that time new policies set in.

It was in summer of 1960 that Khrushchov smote the industries of China by the sudden withdrawal of all Soviet specialists and the breaking of hundreds of contracts for machinery, parts and whole enterprises. This especially hit heavy industry, which was almost entirely built on Soviet blueprints. Some effect was felt in agriculture, when parts failed for tractors or for big irrigation dams.

The three hard years were thus the result of three factors. The natural disasters of weather were the chief

factor, but they impinged on an off-balance economic situation where new social forms had had no time to consolidate, and they were aggravated by a severe blow from the supposed source of "aid".

The policies that carried China through the "disaster years" were first, the commune form of organization, and second, the close relation between industry and agriculture expressed in the formula: "agriculture is the foundation and industry the leading factor".

People's Communes were never the devilish slavery claimed abroad, nor the magic for "Communism at once" which some enthusiasts thought but which the Chinese Communists never claimed. They are a form of social organization that arose in 1958, and that proved highly effective in combining the farming cooperatives — which already contained as members most of the Chinese peasants — for wider needs of mechanization, irrigation and local industries. Their special feature is that they also become government at the basic level, i.e. the township, and thus directly apply the local labor and accumulation to the building of local roads, irrigation, hospitals, schools and small industries, as well as to local welfare work and home defense.

How the communes "saved the country" in the three years of natural disasters is partly told in my booklet "China's Fight for Grain" (New World Press, Peking 1963) and can be only briefly summarized here. The water-control they built in 1957 and 1958 contained the first shock of drought or flood. When this proved inadequate, the communes had many techniques of mutual aid whereby a stricken local group, whether a "production

team" or "brigade" or an entire commune, would first rally its own resources and then supplement these by help from neighboring units on a basis of "equivalent exchange". That is, the stronger neighbors would send tractors, draught animals, and labor in quantity, and even grain and seed, as a loan, which the recipient was to repay in kind, grain being repaid in grain, labor-days by labor-days.

Even in the worst situations when disasters involving many counties demanded state relief, the commune became its distributor and kept the community together to develop all possible local resources. The worst feature of all famines in the "old society" was the pulverizing of communities, in which the rich hoarded grain while the poor abandoned homes and begged or sold children or died of hunger on the roads. In the recent hard years, because of the commune organization, all communities stood, fought, were given aid and avoided starvation. Thus community life, in city or countryside, came out of the disasters stronger than before.

The communes went through several adjustments; they became smaller in size and many more in number. Instead of 26,000 communes with an average membership of nearly 5,000 households, there are as of the end of 1962, 74,700 communes each with an average of 1,800 households, organized in 9 "brigades" (75 "teams"). The "team" or "brigade" is the production unit for farming, while the commune, i.e. the township, is the unit for the wider tasks of irrigation, road building, and small industries. The Chinese Communists still believe that this commune form, combining farming, industry and state power at the basic level, is one that can endure through the period of socialism into the coming epoch of Communism.

AGRICULTURE AS FOUNDATION

The second thing that carried China through the years of disasters was a close interaction between industry and agriculture, quicker and more conscious than in any country I have known. The formula "agriculture as foundation and industry as leading factor" is a long term one. Industry, especially heavy industry, determines the form and rate of change, whether by tractors, pumps or nuclear power. But agriculture is the foundation, which industry remoulds but on which industry is built. China, finding in 1960 that her farms could not feed her expanded industry and having no outside aid, stopped new construction and closed down "unessential" industry, telling the most recently arrived workers, who still had homes in the villages, to go home and raise food. Workers who agreed to go were given aid with transport of household effects, and six months state grain tickets, that they might not burden the farms until they could themselves again produce.

Meantime industry swiftly expanded all those branches which served the farms. First priority went to farm equipment — tractors and irrigation pumps that would at once make agriculture more productive. The equipment was channelled directly to those areas which could most quickly solve the nation's need for food and raw materials: the basic grain areas, the river deltas, the suburban communes where adequate pumping systems might double or triple a city's vegetable supply.

Tractors are made not only in Loyang Tractor Plant which turns out its quota of 15,000 tractors, a Soviet model suited to Siberia and hence to Manchuria and parts of North China; Loyang also makes parts for imported tractors that no longer come. New tractor plants in Pe-

king, Shanghai, Tientsin, Shenyang, Wuhan and other cities, turn out tractors of other models, designed for areas with other needs. Farm machinery works spring up everywhere, even at township level. . . . **Even Tibet, where four years ago the peasants, then serfs, believed that "iron tools poison the soil", now has eight factories making farm implements.** Meantime the handicraft cooperatives, helped by priorities on iron and steel, made 500 MILLION farm tools in the first ten months of 1962!

Drainage and irrigation equipment have equally high priority. Nearly six million horse-power in such equipment went out by the end of 1962, including 1.4 million kilowatts in pumping stations, a tenfold increase in general equipment and a 20 fold increase in electric pumping stations since 1957. This number is already outdated; in spring of 1963 Rewi Alley saw scores of new transmission lines and thousands of new pumps rushing across North Hopei to battle the area's drought. Industrial output leaps fast to an emergency call from agriculture, for a single crop won or lost in a fair-sized area, affects the base of industry too.

This interchange between industry and agriculture becomes a swift rhythm that drives the economy ahead. Industry "leads"; its advance is selective but not narrow and is carefully planned. Factories send out survey teams to study the farmers' needs, whether this be a special kind of tractor for terraced fields, or a heavy-duty bicycle to pull loads on rural lanes. More than a million bicycles a year are made in China, and they are of many models. For, next to farm equipment, second priority goes to consumer goods that the farmer wants.

Fertilizers and insecticides also have priority, and have led an advance of the entire chemical industry, including

plastics and synthetic fibers to lessen the need for cotton. Pharmaceuticals are also well developed; as many medical drugs are made in five days now as in the entire year of 1949, not only the simple eye-lotions and cough mixtures as before, but a full line of sulfa drugs, antibiotics, vitamins. **Twenty million Chinese children were last year safeguarded against polio by oral (Sabin strain) vaccine made in China.** Any epidemic of plague or cholera in adjacent lands of Asia finds the Chinese Red Cross donating large supplies.

Nobody claims that China has a fully grown industry or a modernized agriculture. She has built in five years a sound base on which a self-reliant industrialization will grow. "We do not seek absolute 'self-sufficiency'," explained a leader of foreign trade. "That is a fascist dream. We seek wide relations and trade with foreign lands; we have much to learn from industrialized lands, whether the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, Britain, France or Japan. But we also think that every nation must build with self-reliance on its own base and determine the direction of its growth, adding whatever is possible in trade or fraternal help, on a principle of equality and mutual benefit".

The theme song of China is no longer the overcoming of disasters but the mounting symphony of a new advance.

SHOPPING NOTES

Soap-flakes for washing nylons, a soluble coffee like néscafe but blacker, chocolate bars and "life-savers" comparable to Western quality, a cocomalt powder of eggs, milk and cocoa that

makes a tasty nerve-quieting drink, are items picked up in the corner store. Pop-corn and hot rolls with meat inside are bought on the street, now replaced in summer with ice-cream bars. Nylon socks that wear forever, and a "drip-dry" synthetic weave like silk crepe have been on sale over a year, but variety grows. All China-made!

On everything the price goes down while quality goes up. A friend bought leather sandals for her child at 5 yuan ($2.00), went back in a few days to exchange them and found the price had dropped to 3.50 yuan. Sea-fish are plentiful at 40-60 fen a catty (15 to 25 cents a pound; luscious tomatoes at 4 fen, (less than 2 cents a pound!) Milk at last enters the Chinese diet; Peking now consumes **ten times as much** as in 1959!

Half a million flower plants were sold last year to Peking residents by the nine state-owned flower-shops, not counting plants bought from communes, exchanged with neighbors or dug up on outings. And now they announce a book on **Floriculture,** based on the secrets of a famous flower-growing area that supplied the Imperial Court for six hundred years. Tells how to hasten or retard the blooming period, how to deepen color of blooms or even modify shape by water and manure. Only available so far in Chinese. The Huangtukang Commune of that area supplies Peking year around with 400 different kinds of flowers.

I laugh when a Los Angeles friend asks me to "elaborate" on the kinds of consumer goods. I can list a few things that make my life pleasant. But Shanghai's No. One Department Store lists 50,000; I'm no catalogue!

Bicycles, radios, watches, sewing-machines, plastics of all kinds have increased tremendously; **output on some grew 50 percent, on others tenfold** since 1957. Shanghai makes 13,000 **kinds of toys,** from boxes of construction bricks to small power-driven cars. Dolls appear in gay costumes of 20 nationalities and also as pandas, lions, teddy-bears. **Fifty new designs of toys appeared to celebrate Children's Day, June 1st.**

Shanghai, first big producer of consumer goods, is no longer the only source. Canton has 72 factories making consumer goods, all built or expanded since 1959. Kiang-su Province, formerly dependent on Shanghai, now makes two-thirds of its own consumer goods; it built 29 factories making plastics since 1958. In Yunnan of the far south-west the national minority areas built 25 small paper factories and now supply one-third of the province's paper from local reeds and bamboo.

Shanghai makes machines now for all such localities and sends skilled workers and technicians to help start factories all over China. In 1963 machines for canneries, glass works, leather products and plastics have gone from Shanghai into 20 provinces.

"Rejects" on Soviet orders are quickly bought. They began a couple of years ago, then mostly canned meats. Last month a friend gave me an exquisite shoe-horn, 16 inches long, so one needn't stoop, carved from heavy bam-boo with handle lacquered in floral design. Cost only 8 fen (3 1/3 cents) but I couldn't buy more. I heard they were made to Soviet order, rejected at the border and dumped fast to save storage. . . . Lately Dr. Ma saw those long strings of colored lights they use on Christmas

trees, all over northern Inner Mongolia. Made for the Soviet New Years, turned back for some reason, dumped in Hailar near the border to save return transport. The Mongols decorate their yurts with them; they've electricity now and the tiny off-and-on lamps use little "juice". Must be gay on the wild plains on dark nights!

The general commodity situation is illuminated by the remark of a Chinese friend: "Our traffic cops are vigilant but flexible. Last winter they never stopped me when the light in my bicycle lamp was out because they knew I couldn't get batteries. Now they stop me at the first street corner, because they know you can buy all kinds of batteries."

KEEPING OUT CHINA NEWS!

RETURN TO SENDER
REFUSED ENTRY
F.A.C. VIOLATION

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

For years the U.S. Post-Office burned printed matter they didn't like as "Communist propaganda". Then A. L. Wirin of Los Angeles brought suit in the name of "Civil Liberties" and won. The next trick was to notify recipients that "Communist propaganda" had come for them and would be destroyed unless they signed a paper that they wanted it. This was supposed to terrify!

Now there's a later trick. They send China material back to sender, marked with a "red hand" and "F.A.C. VIOLATION". (Foreign Assets Control.) I airmailed my little booklet "China's Fight for Grain" to Mrs. I. F. Stone in thanks for her husband's fine news-letter. It came back with the "Red Hand" mark!

"Letter from China" goes easily to other lands for 8 cents as "airmail printed matter". It can't get into the U.S.A. that way. I send it to friends by "letter postage" at twice the cost and **hope** it arrives! No land in the world is so isolated from news as the U.S.A.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

OUR URBAN COMMUNES IN KAIFENG

by Shirley Wood, mother of six and college teacher in a provincial town in a recent drought area

You know how our communes were touted abroad as a fiasco. Our Kaifeng urban commune industries were really over-expanded; this displaced labor and raw materials. We saw this and criticized it three years ago. But when the disasters hit, it was these "Big Leap" industries that made recovery possible when our "Giants" were crippled by incomplete equipment. And when the BBC recently mentioned Honan Province as a farm machinery center, it wasn't the big Loyang Tractor Works they meant but our Kaifeng Machinery Works and all the things it grew into through our urban communes.

Many years ago it made copper coins; in 1950 it began making double-share ploughs; in 1959 it produced 300 small combines from parts and steel made mostly by urban communes and our Normal College. Then it gave birth to two Iron Works; these folded, because Kaifeng is too far from coal and iron to make the steel business profitable. Next the Machinery Works gave birth to a big Combine Factory that now produces in the suburbs; the original Works makes pumps, horse-drawn machines, winnowers, grain-sorters and other medium-sized farm machinery of export quality.

The old iron foundry which used to cast stoves and cauldrons, now also makes machine parts. Most of the "Works" set up by the city communes gave up steel-making and took up the thriving trade of repairing the city's bicycles, pedicabs, wagons and hand-carts. A few went in for auto-repair and put in drills, presses and

other equipment to do the installations, repairs and making of parts the Machinery Works no longer cares to handle.

Our little textile factories with hand-looms and hand-operated spinning jennies, were combined and mechanized under Commune management and now make a good quality of thread, strong knitted stockings and underwear from the short staple cotton the big mills won't use.

We also used to make in Kaifeng some very loud dyes that ran at first sight. In the north of town where the earth is solid alkali, most families had a filtering jar and a cauldron to refine crude soda. The communes combined and somewhat modernized this soda business. We now have two kinds of commune-run chemical plants, one refining soda, the other making industrial chemicals. Since 1960 we make carbon paper for export (Sanmen Gorge Brand), and at least two dyes of international standard. We also developed two brands of laundry soap superior to the Shanghai product. That's the "fiasco" or our urban communes.

THE KWANYIN OF DO LOH SE

Rewi Alley

Kwanyin, the female incarnation of Buddha, was the favorite "Goddess of Mercy" in many temples. This 33 feet high Kwanyin overlooks the northern frontier across which for centuries came invaders.

Gone is the ruby from the massive
forehead of this Kwanyin; still
she gazes over ancient roofs
as she has done while armies
of the ages marched in,
massacred, tramped away, leaving
the people to start all over.

Now she sees the dust rise
from trucks carrying to the new
dam across the valley,
which will end flooded fields
too long denied harvest.

A summer's sun
glints in, lights up her head,
giving it the look seen now
on faces of people below:
Peace, confidence, power.

TRUE TALES OF CHINESE CHILDREN

*(Written for Letter No. 9, omitted for space and replaced by the report from Kaifeng — **A.L.S.**)*

A five-year-old boy named Bashi often played in the square by the Paoting railway station; it was near his home. One day he heard the loudspeaker call: "All aboard for Peking. The train is leaving," and followed the stream of passengers into the train. Nobody stopped him; he might have been a passenger's child and he needed no ticket at that age. In the four-hour trip he wandered about, accepted tidbits of food, looked out of windows, saw nothing to fear. In Peking the gate-keeper noticed him enough to shout: "Mothers, look after your children," but Bashi went on through. He followed passengers into a bright red bus.

From then on Bashi toured three-fourths of Peking, picking trolleys and busses by the bright colors, blue, scarlet, yellow. Dusk found him crying in the diplomatic quarter because he was hungry and the people looked strange. A PLA man picked him up and the familiar uniform calmed him but he couldn't tell where he belonged. So he landed in the police refuge for lost children where they cheered him with candy, fed him, put him to bed. Bashi was smiling again, calling them "uncles" and "aunties".

The police were not as light-hearted as Bashi. They phoned to every ward and suburb but nobody seemed to have lost a child. Bashi stayed on in the refuge seeing other children come, be cheered with candy and eventually leave. Bashi remained.

On the eighth day somebody thought Bashi's accent suggested Paoting, a city four hours away in Hopei Province. A phone to Paoting discovered distraught parents who had already searched "for the body" in 50 wide-mouthed wells.

Bashi was eating sweets when his father reached the refuge. The man burst into tears. Bashi, disturbed, pulled a candy from his pocket. "Don't you want a candy, daddy," he comforted. Everyone laughed.

* * *

This recalls the time when my secretary Feng-feng and I took two little boys under seven by plane from the southern tip of Hainan to Canton. The father brought them down to the beach for their winter vacation; he was staying on but the boys had to go back for school. I asked Feng-feng if she knew the family; she replied that she knew the organization for which they worked and their address was not far out of our way.

Early next morning the father presented Feng-feng to the boys as their "new auntie" who would take them to mother by plane. The boys were elated. They chattered with the chauffeur to the airport and played with the pilots under the plane; the older boy declared intent to become an air-force pilot. Alas! They were both very air-sick in the fifty minute hop to Haiko and landed much deflated.

In the three-hour wait, I was taken up town for an interview and lunch with one of the island's leaders. The boys of course went along, were put to bed in our host's bedroom and later came out to view the lunch. The older boy gazed at the food with jaundiced eye and turned away, saying: "It would just be wasted."

The younger boy followed him back to bed. I laughed; the words so neatly expressed the general attitude of "thrift" that year.

In Canton the local Peace Committee representative met us by auto and took one of the unexpected boys on his lap while Feng-feng took the other. We took a detour to land them in their mother's arms. The auto and the suit of our host needed cleaning; the boy had been sick in the arms of the man who met us and whom the boy called "uncle" too.

* * *

This brings me to the tale of the Indian officers, but first I must explain that Chinese children today are taught that the world is one family, and especially all Chinese are either "uncles", "aunties", "grandpas" or "grannies", according to sex and age. When the Soviet specialists were in China, they were "Soviet uncles". Children still use the term for any white-skinned respected foreigner like Rewi Alley of New Zealand and Dr. Ma, an American of Syrian birth. All these are "Soviet uncles" to Chinese children.

The Indian soldiers captured in the Himalayas, invading Chinese territory, were all sent home by the Chinese. Most of the 3,000 odd captured men went back by the nearest mountain passes by arrangement with the Indian Red Cross. The 27 captured officers of field-grade were given a trip through China and returned by plane from Kunming to Calcutta. This gave New Delhi a chance to claim that they had been "paraded through the streets of China's cities", a nasty slur spread even by Nehru's daughter, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and quite untrue. The few men who entered China's cities went on

private tour, at their own request, and nobody was told their identity until after they had left.

Then word leaked out through interpreters and I learned the following. The Indian officers were surprised to find no war-fever in China, no hate against India. The tale of their visit to a kindergarten is too good to keep. The Indians themselves asked the children: "Who do you think we are?"

After a puzzled pause a bright child said: "We know! You're Cuban uncles"! The other children nodded in pleased assent.

Everyone in China gets the point at once. The Indians were clearly not Chinese, for, while China has many nationalities, the Indians made it obvious by asking. They could not be "Soviet uncles" because of their dark skin. But today there is another country which every Chinese child admires. Clearly, they must be "Cuban uncles".

Letter Number 10

July 26, 1963

Dear friends,

China is called all kinds of names from all points of the compass. I shall not take the time or space to list the epithets. "Better to light one candle than to curse the darkness". I shall tell briefly, without cursing anyone, just why I came to China and what I found.

WHY I CAME TO CHINA AT THE AGE OF 72

I was just over sixty when I first saw Yenan in 1946. I had known two great social systems. My first thirty years were spent in Western America where we fought for better forms of democracy, women's suffrage, labor's participation in politics, public ownership of utilities against the "Wall St. Octopus". I became a member of the Seattle School Board and later feature editor of the *Seattle Union Record,* a daily owned by the Central Labor Council. We seemed to win battles, but police attacks on "Reds" grew worse after the First World War.

In 1921 I went to Moscow, made my home there for nearly thirty years, married there, initiated and helped organize the first *Moscow Daily News,* was greatly stirred by the building of the first socialist state in the world in the five-year plans, wrote hundreds of articles about it and some fifteen books. Almost every year I went to America to lecture and make contacts with publishers; on these trips I stopped in other countries on the way. Thus I wrote "Spain in Arms, 1937" and saw China in revolution in 1925-27, and later in war with Japan. In August 1946, on my fifth trip through China, bound for my Moscow home but not in haste, since my husband had died in the war, I came to Yenan.

I spent the winter in Yenan, living in a "cave", a 12-by-20-foot room dug into a cliff, with arched walls of white-washed earth, stone-flagged floor and front of lattice filled in with paper windows. Can I explain why I wanted to stay forever? There were no luxuries and few comforts. There were people with keen minds, deep thoughts and a world view. I felt my own mind developing. I wrote later: "Never have I felt so close to the human power that builds the world as in that isolated, beleaguered Yenan."

Party officials worked long hours on meager food, in cold caves by dim lamps. But they worked without strain even under desultory bombing. Their confidence was not expressed in any boast that "the Communists will win". It was "the Chinese people will win and the Communists will lead as long as they serve the people".

The Chinese people, the people of the world, were the ultimate reference. "Go among the people", "Learn from the people" were the admonitions. Intellectuals and officials were always going off on long assignments

among peasants. Lousy peasants — real lice, for I saw peasants fish them out and crack them — dropped in and stayed overnight in the caves of General Chu Teh and Chairman Mao Tse-tung. In twelve Yenan years the Chinese Communists had fitted themselves to the land, the rhythm of its seasons, the mood of its peasants. They were at home in the homes of the people, moving confidently without fear. Even when the enemy was advancing sixty miles away and Yenan was being evacuated, people took time to rejoice in the new fall of snow, "so good for the crops".

Two long talks I recall that have a meaning for today. The first was the afternoon with Mao Tse-tung on the hard earth terrace in front of the string of caves in which he lived and accommodated visiting peasants. We touched world affairs. At the time the U.S.A. had monopoly of the atom bomb and was using it to pressure Stalin with the "Baruch Plan", a "United Nations control" which would have given Washington dominance over the mineral resources and industrial complex of the U.S.S.R. The third world war was supposed imminent and only to be avoided by yielding to Washington. Mao told me that "U.S. imperialism" was using the "anti-Communist" slogan as a smoke-screen behind which it took over the colonies and possessions of its Allies. To attack the U.S.S.R. was final objective, but "not easy", and would be postponed until the U.S.A. won many lesser victories.

It was in this talk that Mao first developed the metaphor of the "paper tiger", a poetic way of stating an elementary principle of Marxism, that capitalism will inevitably disintegrate. All reactionaries, he said, are "paper tigers", terrible to look on but melting in the storms of history. He listed the Russian Tsar, the German

Hitler, Chiang Kai-shek, and even the atom bomb. . . . All these were transient, only the people endure. Basically all power is with the people. "In the end the bomb will not destroy the people; the people will destroy the bomb." I was so impressed by these words that I used them later for a Christmas card.

"What is the strength of the imperialists?" he said. "It lies only in the unconsciousness of the people. The consciousness of the people is the basic question. Not explosives or weapons or atom bombs but the man who handles them. He is still to be educated." He doubted whether the atom bomb would again be used in warfare. Possibly "its great bursting over Hiroshima destroyed it. For the people of the world turned against it".

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

A second memorable talk was with Lu Ting-yi, head of propaganda, who gave several days to tell me the history of the Chinese Communist Party. To my surprise, much of it was a history of mistakes and what was learned from them. The Communists had spent two years discussing this in 1943-45 during the anti-Japanese war, in far-scattered units separated by Japanese lines. They had summed it up in April 1945 at their Seventh Party Congress, which forged the strategy for victory.

"The Chinese Communist Party was always heroic," said Lu, "but many mistakes were made by the leadership in getting experience. They were costly mistakes and they taught us to avoid such mistakes later."

What especially struck me was that the Communists took responsibility for all the mistakes, no matter by whose advice or treason they came. They did not blame

the collapse of the Great Revolution in 1927 on the advice of Borodin, the Russian High Adviser, or even on the treason of Chiang Kai-shek who massacred his Communist allies. They, the Communists, were responsible if they took the wrong advice or if they failed to estimate Chiang's nature and handle him accordingly.

This entire approach was new to me. In America we were always "God's country", qualified to liberate and improve the world. In Russia there was always "the perfect system", spoiled till now by some personal devils. In China they "made mistakes", suffered by them, acknowledged and studied them, thus planned victory.

Here at last seemed credible history of the difficult advance of Man.

IN RUSSIA AND AMERICA

In March 1947, the Communists told me I must leave Yenan. They were evacuating their last capital and going into the hills where I was unable to go. Mao told me I might return "when we again have contact with the world". He thought it would be in about two years. He under-stated. In less than a year I met Chinese in Paris who told me the time was near for my return. "Events move faster than we thought." By autumn of 1948 I was in Moscow bound for China with a Chinese invitation to come to Manchuria and move south with the coming events. Five months I kept asking for my Soviet exit visa. Then, just as Chinese friends arrived who might secure my journey, the Russians arrested me as a "spy" and sent me out through Poland. Five days in jail I wondered what I had stepped on. I never knew.

Six years I lived in America; no Communists in the world would speak to me. Then Moscow "rehabilitated" me, by publishing that the charges had been "without grounds". Again an invitation came from China. This time it took three years' legal fight to get my American passport. I had it by spring of 1958. Ten years late!

I was 72 then, living in Los Angeles where I had more friends than anywhere else. I owned a town house, a summer lodge in the mountains, a winter cabin in the desert, a car and a driver's license to take myself about. I had income to live on for life. Should I go to China now?

I went to Moscow first, my second home for nearly thirty years. My husband's relatives urged me to stay. "Here you have always a home!" I was moved. I was even more moved when the Writers' Union made me their guest and sent me for a month to a Rest Home while they got back all the rubles I had lost at the deportation, and an order for a Moscow apartment again. "Would I care to choose it now?" I thanked them very sincerely but said: "Better wait till I return from Peking."

Could Peking have the magic Yenan had? Could I adjust to Chinese life at 72? Two months later I told my Chinese friends: "This is not a criticism of any other country, neither the U.S.A. nor the U.S.S.R. But I think the Chinese know better than anyone the way for man. I want to learn and write." They found an apartment for me in the Peace Committee's compound.

IN PEKING

In Peking I found the qualities that had drawn me to Yenan, but on wider scale. The keen minds and deep thoughts were operating now for a nation that held one-

fourth of mankind. There was still the faith that ordinary men are greater than the powers of nature or the mechanisms of man's hands, and will master them all in the end. This was operating now to tame the rivers and rebuild the worn-out soils for one-fourth the people of earth. There was still the worldwide view. People came from a hundred nations to Peking and were received as equal partners in man's struggle to advance. They still held that victory depended not on the power of weapons but on awakening the consciousness of man.

Not much "personal adjustment" was needed. Chinese are also wise in daily details of life and work. They had planted me in a tree-grown compound, centrally located, with several buildings in which some fifty Chinese and half a dozen foreigners from five continents lived and worked on problems of world peace. None of them interfered with my work of writing what I chose, but all supplied contacts and intelligent talk. I had no housekeeping cares; a housekeeper, cook, and handy-man looked after the four apartments in one large house. A score of adorable children lived in the yard, expanding to fifty at week-ends, when the full-time kindergarten contingent came home. All of them called me "grandma" but never intruded unless I invited. Thus I had social life at all levels but privacy when I chose. The only comparable life I had had in America was in Hull House or similar social centers; it was a kind of life I always liked.

I found myself growing younger, healthier, even better-tempered. I wrote four books in the first three years, a record never touched before. I went to Tibet — the only American woman who ever saw Lhasa, climbed the thirteen floors of the Potala Palace to the roof, saw the freeing of the serfs and the beginning of land reform.

This increase in working ability I attribute partly to the stimulus Peking offers as a world capital, and partly to the courtesies of personal life in China, especially given to old age. I shrink now at the thought of travelling in the West, where old women are a dime a dozen, pushed about by everyone. In China "Old Lady" is a title!

"POWER IS IN THE PEOPLE"

In Peking as in Yenan, efforts are made to keep leadership close to the people, for the awakened consciousness of the people is the great source of power. New techniques for this are continually devised. Students from primary school through universities spend considerable periods working on farms or in factories to keep in touch with the people's life. Office workers and civil servants do the same. My secretary takes a month each year, usually a few days at a time, to hoe corn or harvest wheat where needed. Central Committee members and high officials too old for physical work, are expected to spend four months a year away from their offices in travelling the country.

Mao Tse-tung set the example in 1958, when he resigned as chief of state in order to be free from routine duties and have time to meet the people by travelling around the country. This is still his practise.

"Learning from mistakes" is a universal practise now. Any geological or medical team that returns from a field trip, or any other group that completes a task, at once holds discussion to criticize the work. Criticisms are basic and drastic. Nobody is supposed to take personal offence. Each person, in fact, is expected to criticize himself. Everyone, without exception, is supposed to try to improve himself towards becoming the kind of person

that can live under Communism. For Communism is not held to depend solely on economic forms and on productivity, but on the consciousness of men.

If I ask Chinese friends today what is the chief problem, the chances are that they will not say "agriculture", or "industrialization" but "Socialist Education". How to keep the revolutionary spirit alive when the men who made the revolution pass? How to fight the tendency of all men and all revolutions to back-slide?

THE WIDER LOYALTIES

One becomes aware of a widening circle of loyalties, in which the greater includes and supersedes the less. An individual is judged by how he serves the community, but the community is expected to cherish the lives and talents of its individuals. The community in turn serves not only itself but the country. China herself must put the interests of the Socialist Camp above her own interests as a nation; this was the reason given for not exposing the details of Khrushchov's severe economic crack-down in 1960. The Socialist Camp, however, does not exist for its own enrichment but to serve the world's peoples. So, when questions of the peace and progress of the world's peoples are concerned, Chinese speak out, even against other members of the Socialist Camp.

China keeps her revolutionary spirit alive not only by contacts of leaders with workers and peasants, but also by sharing the struggles of oppressed peoples and nations the world over. From many lands they come to Peking, especially from peoples in Asia, Africa, Latin America, in revolt against imperialist oppression, seeking knowledge and aid. China shares with them her own experience and

learns in turn from them. China always considers this exchange a two-way street. The socialist lands, by their existence and experience, assist the colonial peoples' struggle for liberation; this struggle of colonial peoples against imperialism is a main force disintegrating imperialism and thus saving the socialist lands. They are thus equal allies in the onward march of man.

Any struggle in any part of the world that checks and defeats imperialism is seen by China as a force for world progress and a defense for world peace. This is the doctrinal point most at issue today. Are the Algerians, the South Vietnamese, the Angolans a force for world peace even if, in resisting imperialist aggression, they are driven to acts of war? China says flatly: "Yes!" Many people say the reverse and urge the "peaceful road to socialism". Others vacillate, and think the Algerians "excusable" but not a "force for peace". Many in the West fear that even a small war — some even think a strike — can escalate into world war.

Such people call China "belligerent", "against peaceful coexistence", "inciting war". Such charges are lies. The only statement Mao released for publication from his long talk with Edgar Snow two years ago said: "We do not want war. We hold that war should not be used as a means to settle disputes between nations." China developed the "five principles of coexistence" before Khrushchov came to power and has followed them in her dealings with capitalist nations. Her boundary agreements with Burma, Nepal, Pakistan, Mongolia were generous; Pakistan boasted that China gave her "most of the fertile lands".

Nor is China against negotiations, even with imperialists; she has often urged an "Atom-free Zone" by negotia-

tion with all the Asian and Pacific nations, including the United States. But Chinese do not believe that any such treaties are "guaranteed" by the signature of the imperialists or by any good-will on their part. Only the constant pressure of the peoples will guarantee treaties; this pressure against imperialism must continue until imperialism is brought down. Only thus can world peace be finally secure.

The "peace forces" mentioned in the 1957 and 1960 Moscow Declaration and Statement, include the socialist lands, the national liberation movements, the workers' movements in capitalist lands and the general peace movements. This was jointly agreed by the Communist Parties of the world. But points at issue have come to me in letters. "Many peace movements refuse to denounce U.S. imperialism lest they alienate people," writes one. "The chief fear is that any revolution that uses arms may bring on nuclear war," writes another.

To this I reply that "any peace movement" depends on the "consciousness" of its members. Men in Britain who march against Polaris bases are marching against U.S. imperialism, but may not entirely realize it; their leaders should tell them. If the leaders deceive them into trusting Kennedy, they are going backward. China's position has been many times given, most recently in joint statement of chiefs of state of China and North Korea, June 23:

> **"Today there can be no struggle for peace without a struggle against U.S. imperialism, the main force of aggression and war".**

Many people in the West think China does not realize the terrible nature of nuclear war, and treats it lightly. Mao has several times replied to foreign visitors that if

he thought he could induce the imperialists to refrain from nuclear war by showing fear of it, he would at once tell the Chinese to be very much afraid; but he felt this would provoke rather than deter an imperialist strike.

In this context I recall Mao's statements in Yenan, at a time when many Western experts forecast nuclear war within ten years. Seventeen years have passed and in this time the Chinese liberated one-fourth of mankind, and Ho Chi Minh defeated the French in Indo-China and revolutions succeeded in Korea, Cuba, Algeria. These revolutions changed the balance of world power, saved the U.S.S.R. from its long "capitalist encirclement", tripled the population of the socialist nations and opened the way for national liberation movements in three continents.

ALL THESE REVOLUTIONS were won against an imperialism that wielded the nuclear bombs and threatened many times to use them.

Would the world be safer and more peaceful today if China had yielded in 1950 to MacArthur's atomic blackmail, and let the U.S. forces pass through Manchuria against the U.S.S.R.? Or if Ho Chi Minh had lifted the siege of Dien Bien Phu when Dulles twice offered the A-Bomb to France? Or if Algerians had obeyed the French Communists who urged the "peaceful road"? Or if Cubans had feared to provoke the H-Bombs only 90 miles away?

WHAT STOPPED THE USE OF THE BOMBS?

There were many "perfect targets". But a bomb dropped on Havana might have lost all Latin America to the United States. And bombs on populous Shanghai or beautiful ancient Peking or the Yellow River dykes, might

well have "lost Asia". Seventeen years ago Mao said: "The people of the world turned against it." Is there not in this some truth? The people of the world are only partly conscious but they know enough to hate the nuclear bombs. When they are fully conscious, they will know how to end them. Is it not then true that "the basic question is the consciousness of the people"? To confuse the people's consciousness is the deadly sin.

Mao once said: "Humanity is only in its infancy." When it is full grown, what will it make of our world?

* * *

I myself come from the West and inherit its fears. I am never quite so confident as the Chinese. When I think of the billions of money spent for expert lying in foreign offices, general staffs and propaganda organs of imperialism, of the stockpiles of nuclear bombs that can many times **"overkill"** the population of our planet, and of men's tendencies to national and racial hates and to just plain back-sliding, I wonder if humanity will grow up fast enough to save itself from death.

But I know that the first essential to survival is to believe that you can survive. And next, to identify the enemy and to know your own mistakes and strength. And I take heart from the fact that the Pentagon, which boasts that it can "overkill" the planet, has not yet been able to take Korea or Cuba or Viet Nam or Laos, because of the complex pressures that get in the way. So the Chinese may be right in thinking that, as men grow steadily more conscious, they will master the forces of nature and the mechanisms of men's hands — even H-Bombs — and the nature of man himself by the ordinary human powers of reason,

courage, labor and collective struggle. At any rate the Chinese work at it. And that was why I came to China at the age of 72.

Sartre said it shorter and better when he came in 1955-56 and spoke on the Peking radio, in words that came to me through two translations to this effect: "I come from a West that is increasingly concerned with the thought of Death; I find here 650 million people entirely taken with the idea of Life. This has brought something new into my own life. I shall never be the same as before." Many people can say this. I am one.

Yours,

Anna Louise Strong

P.S.

REMAKING THE LANDS AND THE WATERS

The belief that man can conquer nature was the force behind the "Big Leap" in 1958, and led to amazing achievements. Today Chinese are remaking lands and waters on a vast scale. They have taken an ancient land, with soil worn out by centuries of double-cropping and erosion, where much rain comes at wrong times and rivers run wild. They are terracing hills, driving back sand-dunes, watering deserts, washing out saline and alkali flats, draining thousand-year-old swamps, planting trees by the scores of millions. **This is in every part of China, in news every week.**

One sample came to attention this summer when Kwangtung Province gave aid to the great city of Hongkong which, as *NY Times* May 23 reported, was "gasping for water" because of a long dry spell. "Restaurants limited customers to half a glass of water, consumers were rationed to four hours in four days, farmers wrote off their rice crops, and industry faced shutdown". The Chinese Chamber of Commerce and trade unions in Hongkong asked aid from the adjacent province Kwangtung, which already supplies Hongkong with five billion gallons a year from Shumchun Reservoir, built in 1961. Kwangtung, though hit by the same eight months drought, offered an additional 4.4 million gallons daily from Canton water mains or "other convenient sources".

How did this once poverty-stricken province get better water reserves than the millionaires of the Hongkong Peak? The communes built 1,000 reservoirs and 33 irrigation systems since 1958. They had therefore reserves of 4.6 BILLION TONS from last summer's rains, and were able to irrigate 90 percent of their planned early rice crops besides having surplus for Hongkong.

I visited one of their irrigation systems last spring and was struck by its way of financing. The Youth Canal provides irrigation for over 400,000 acres on the drought-ridden Leichow Peninsula. Its reservoir, begun in 1958, holds a billion tons of water; its main canal is navigable, over 100 miles long. The manager said that the cost to the state was relatively low because "the **local communes donated SIXTY MILLION LABOR-DAYS"** to reservoir and main canal, aside from the smaller trenches dug on their own lands. The West calls it "slave labor"; the peasants call it "investing labor to save labor forever". The district leaders told each commune of the project,

how much water each would get and what labor-days would be their "share of work". They all discussed it and agreed, glad to get irrigation without paying any money but only giving labor in slack season.

Today their annual "water fee" is only 35 to 60 cents per acre for costs of repairs and handling. Such projects under capitalism — even the TVA in America — charge water fees that include amortization and interest on high labor costs as well as profits on materials. The Youth Canal never "capitalized" those sixty million labor-days; the peasants built it for themselves, improving their own land forever, never to be taxed or repaid.

This was what Chinese call "awakening the consciousness" of the Kwangtung peasants. A mighty force!

A.L.S.

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